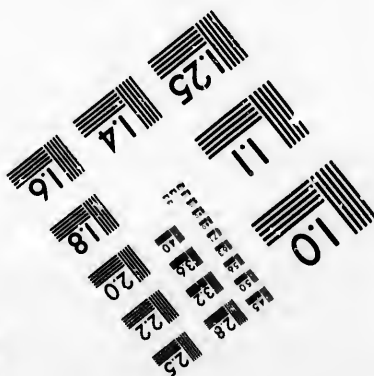
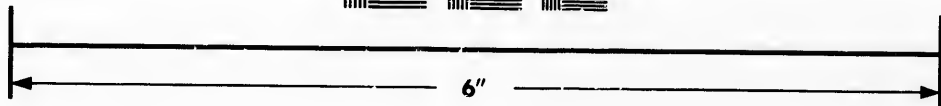
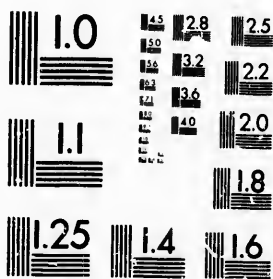


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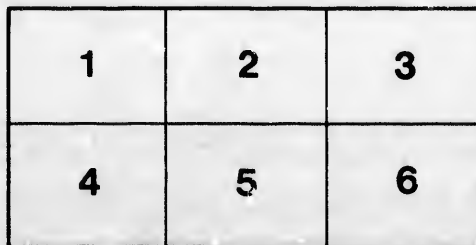
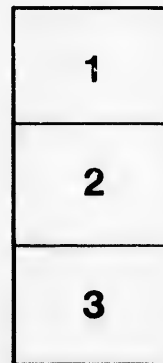
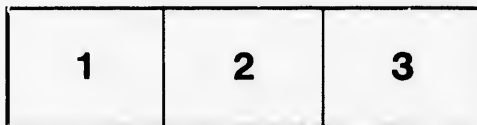
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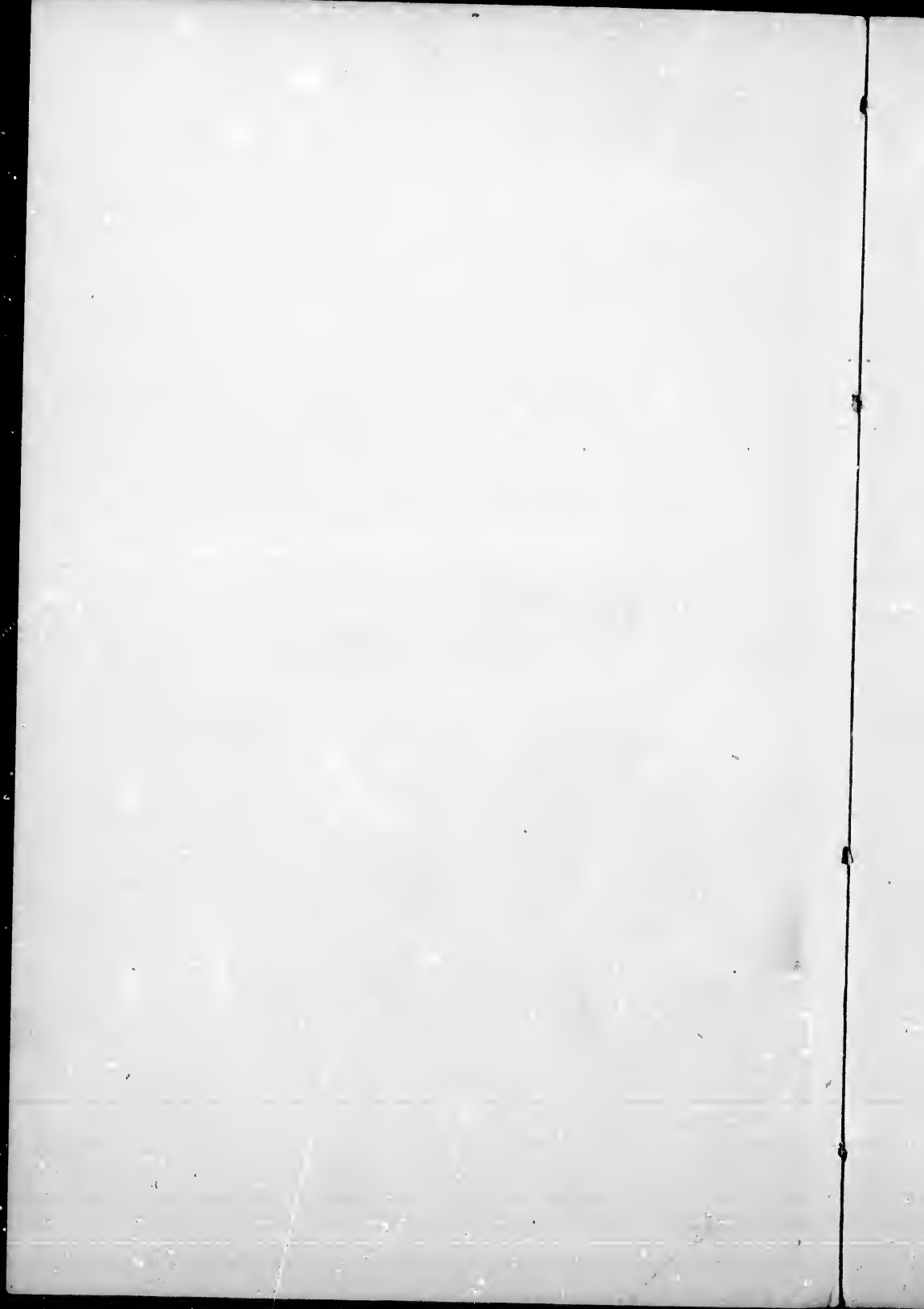
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A MEMOIR, BY HIS FRIEND

HENRY VANE

By Frederick George Scott

*Author of "The Soul's Quest and other Poems"*



PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. OLIPHANT ANDERSON  
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## PROLOGUE.

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**T**HE silent processes have been at work for centuries, and now they culminate, temporarily, in an episode—Hazlewood. Down from sidereal wastes, up from green depths of ocean, centripetally from wide forests areas, forces have come, through perpetual modifications, until the supreme result for the time has been arrived at, and Hazlewood, small, red, plaintive, lies in his nurse's arms. "What interest have we in this infant?" you ask. Has he lived? Is he a real person? Is he the writer? Is he my idea of you, Reader? Yes, he is all these, and being all, is of course none of them. Nevertheless, Hazlewood has been conceived and born, and being born must live and thrive, he having the good fortune not to be one of the schemes for the amelioration of man's lot, which are often conceived, and even born, and yet do not live and thrive.

Hazlewood does not do much at first. He

wakes and cries, and takes his natural food, and then goes to sleep again. He breathes, his heart beats, and the forces within him pursue their natural course in the process of development. We are not particularly interested in them, but this is simply because we cannot perceive their working. Infinitely interested we should be could we do so. What a marvellous sight, had we eyes to behold it, would be the unfolding of the latent intellectual powers in that little mind-world! What a new light it would throw on the after dealings of the soul in life! At what moment in the progress of the individual does the separation occur between the conscious intellectual life and the unconscious physical life? When, again, are the different moments in which these two phases of being branch off into the ever multiplying variations which mark the progress of the individual? All this we cannot know, but it is not useless to suggest these questions, inasmuch as they prove that Hazlewood even in his nurse's arms is not uninteresting—nay, is supremely interesting, even if beyond comprehension to enquiring spirits. But Hazlewood is not to be always in his nurse's arms.

The development goes on within him. The moments are passed one by one. The grey, fixed world without him, and which he feels close upon him, close as the warm, moist kisses of Maria are upon his cheeks, he discovers is subject to temporary eclipse by a slight voluntary act of his own ;—he knows nothing of eyes as yet. Again, he discovers that this fixed, grey sensation,—the world, by another voluntary act may be recalled from its eclipse. A further step is reached. Light appears. It is only a candle flame, but his sensations are intensified. He will stop his cries at any time and *feel*. Once more the day comes when colour is appreciated, rich, warm, sensuous colour. It is only an old red shawl hung over the end of his mother's bed, but stirring in his blood are the same forces which influenced the choice of flower and fruit, and the mating of diverse ancestors with variegated skins and coats ; and this is why Hazlewood looks and looks with wide, infant eyes in which as yet the pupil can scarcely be distinguished from the iris. Lastly, the grand point is gained, he can perceive motion. He recognizes change in the universe which has been hitherto

fixed and close upon his brain. Swift motion dazzles him. He cannot follow it at first, but still he can perceive change. Each change is a separate thought, a new emotion. The foundations of language are laid, also the foundations of our story, or romance, or psychical study, or biography.

For most of the evils and goods in life, gentle Reader, the wise man may feel sincerely thankful. I pray at the beginning of my task that it may be so carried out as to prove no exception to the general rule.

## CHAPTER I.

**W**HERE was Hazlewood born? At Langdon Vicarage, in Berkshire. Three elms stood up leafless and drear and shook their grizzled arms forebodingly all that windy winter's night on which Hazlewood uttered his first cry. These elms faced the porch, and by them ran a gravel path, one way to the church and the other way to the road. In the warm Spring days, crocuses will peep up round the grass plots, and the Virginia creeper clinging to the quaint brick house will put forth tender buds. Not far off is the old Norman church with its massy square tower. Round it is the graveyard, and, beyond, is a line of wood, which rises in a gentle slope until it forms the last battlements over which the setting sun takes his final survey of the earth. Sweet, hallowed memories underlie all Hazlewood's thoughts in after life. They are called up from time to time by odd scraps of music, and the scents of flowers, and the

tender changes in the sky's colourings. The memories are those of Langdon, the elms, the house, the church and its services, and two faces, sweetly calm, and growing more ethereal in the lapse of time—the faces of his father and mother. Lichens, yellow and gray, some round like little moons with lunar rays, some long and straggling, creep in and out of the incised lettering on a grey tombstone which records the names and dates of two faithful lives, and presses down upon the dust of two faithful hearts. The wind, which comes down from the hills in a long sweep, curls round as it reaches the corner where they are laid, close under the chancel wall, and deposits there in the late Autumn little piles of yellow and brown leaves, which it whirls round and round, and then lays to rest, anon whirling them round again, and again dropping them, as though they were its last words to the dead, and it were loth to let them fall forever.

Other memories Hazlewood carried away with him from his boyhood's home, but his parents' comparatively early death, by which he was left an orphan at the age of fourteen, filled his whole mind with an undercurrent of sadness, which was with

him even in moments of extreme joy, and gave a pathetic tenderness to his mirth.

It was on his return to school after this double bereavement, for his parents died within a few weeks of one another, that I first saw Hazlewood. He was a tall, dark boy, with large wistful eyes, and a solemn, earnest way of speaking at times that got him the nickname of "parson." Yet he was full of life too, and was leader in many a boyish act of sport and mischief. His natural bent, however, was meditative. His mind drifted perpetually through an unending series of emotions, and outside nature was only real to him, in so far as it fitted in with the mental mood predominant at the time. When in our walks we have come to one turn of the road, where the hedges are very high on both sides, and a little stream trickles down from the roots of an overhanging elm, making the place damp and cool, he has often stood for several minutes without speaking, and declared afterwards that the wet, earthy smell and tinkling noise of the brooklet had called up in him emotions beyond the power of speech, and exquisitely sad.

Why Hazlewood and I became friends I can-



not tell, unless it were that, our natures being complete opposites, each supplied to the other what that other lacked in himself. Hazlewood was to me the living embodiment of the spirit of poesy and ideality. Doubtless my prosaic and more commonplace nature he found restful. An ardent spirit, I have frequently observed, cannot brook contradiction, or even enthusiasm in opposite lines of thought, in others. Hence men of genius nearly always choose for their closest friends those who by nature are receptive rather than initiative. The favour of conferring friendship was all on his side—I was so carried away by the splendour of his imagination, and the knightliness of his disposition, and a subtle grace that won the hearts of all with whom he came in contact, that I would as soon have parted with my right hand as have forfeited the friendship of one so attractive. Yet there was an element of weakness in his nature. His mental organization was too fine; it predominated over his bodily in too great a degree. When the mood was upon him, he could do anything, but the mood would quickly pass and his powers were gone. It might have been said of his spirit, that it was like

the wind which bloweth where it listeth. There was in him no settled purpose, no continuity or aim, only a continuity of variation; a defect, however, which added to his attractiveness.

He himself was conscious of this weakness, and a shade would pass over his face if anyone remarked it to him. His eyes would assume a scared, helpless look, as though he were caught hopelessly in the toils of destiny, or trod the path of a preordained fate. He has often spoken to me on the subject. "Vane," he used to say, "other people have something which I have not. There is something wrong in my composition. Something was forgotten when I was made."

Now when I look back on the long years of our friendship, and see the path of the illustrious spirit through the world, and note its failures and successes, point by point, what a light is thrown upon its mysterious and dark places by this knowledge of our boyhood's days. The end has come now; the restless, unquiet, sad spirit is still; the world has its idea of what he was and what he did, but it is only I and one other who knew the man throughout as he really was, and the greatness of his

victory. His life was one which we cannot fully unravel until death cuts it, and then we know it in its parts and we behold the grandeur of its course.

Clearly now, over the lapse of years, stands out one scene from our school days. It was the night before he left for his scholarship at Oxford, when we were to part for some years. After the lights were out, he came over and sat on my bed (being older boys we had a room to ourselves), and talked about his past and his future. The moonlight fell upon his face, and his eyes were full of spiritual light. I do not suppose that I thought of such things then, but as I recall the scene, I see it now with a fuller meaning. With his dark, curly hair, in the weird light, he made a study for an old master. Suddenly his voice struck a note of deep sorrow.

“Harry,” he said, “I don’t think I shall ever be a success. I don’t know why it is, but I am not happy, I cannot be. The present is grey and mysterious, the future is all dark and full of terrors.” We were both silent for a few moments, then he added, with his face still turned to the

moonlit window, and the dark tree tops, and a star which shone even in the presence of the stronger light, speaking softly as though he addressed some spiritual presence beyond my vision, "Old Archer's sermon, to-day, how curious it was. It all seemed like a prophecy or the dream of a prophecy. And the text, surely that means life, life as it is to most men, to all men who think; 'And it shall come to pass in that day that the light shall not be clear nor dark, but it shall be one day, which shall be known unto the Lord, not day nor night, but it shall come to pass that at eventime it shall be light.' God grant that at eventime it may be light.'

## CHAPTER II.

**A**LTHOUGH Hazlewood fell off very much towards the end of his college career, for the first year or two his course at the University was a brilliant one. He was looked upon as the coming man. Always beyond his years in his power to grasp intellectual subtleties and to classify and analyse the new facts he was daily acquiring, he had made under the influence and inspiration of his new surroundings, one of those mental bounds which were so characteristic of the man. In conversing with him, I have often noticed how his mind would jump the intervening reasoning and arrive spontaneously at a conclusion which only after long and careful consideration, I was able to perceive to be the correct one. It seemed to me that in him emotion formed the foundation of his intellectual life, and his thoughts were linked together, not in the manner of logical sequence, but in an extraordinary way, by states of feeling. He

could, as I have said, do all things while the mood was upon him ; that is, while a sufficient external stimulus played upon his emotional nature. His was, I suppose, the pure artistic temperament. But the moods ebbed and flowed, and his nature appeared incapable of permanent progression in one line. These changes of mood I speak of, were apparent not simply to me but to all who knew him. For so transparently honest was he, that we saw continually into his inner heart as through glass, and noble and good and loving and pure that heart was, but weak as a child's, blown hither and thither by passions of overwhelming force. That unknown quality, or power, which we felt he lacked, though we could not define it, had he had it, would have made him the noblest and greatest of men. He was like a grand arch without a keystone, a ship full sail without a rudder, the magnificent temple of a deity, without that deity's inner shrine. Oxford, therefore, with its ancient memories, its unique life, the cultured tone of all around him, above all, the admiration which his high spirits, his originality and his moods of deep earnestness won for him, acted as a tremendous

stimulus to his mental growth, and in a few months, the thoughtful, ardent school boy became a man and even leader. In the Union he had spoken several times, and his speeches had created a sensation. Already he had gathered round him a set of his own in which he was almost worshipped. He wrote occasionally, and brilliantly, for a college paper, long since suppressed, in which the wildest schemes were propounded for the reformation of society. To his tutors, no less than to the undergraduates, he was fascinating in the extreme. They failed to understand him, and yet surely, if they did so, the fault was not his. For there he was before them, simple and unaffected, and, as I have said, transparently honest. In every mood his heart was open and generous, and full of sympathy and love. Not less attractive to those who watched him narrowly, than his noble bearing and buoyancy of spirits, was that deep tinge of melancholy which coloured all his thoughts. It drew out the heart towards him and struck a note of sincerity, the existence of which might otherwise have been questioned in one so subject to change. Sometimes this melancholy would strike

him suddenly, in the midst of his mirth or excitement, and a shade would pass over his face, as I have seen a field darkened during sunshine by an intercepting cloud.

It is not my place in this biography to speak of myself, but it falls naturally into the course of it to say, that on leaving school, as my father, a poor country vicar with a large family, could not afford to send me to the university, it was decided that I should spend a year at home reading with him, with a view ultimately to my entering a theological college and taking orders. My home was a quiet and happy one, and the love of God cemented the union of its members, and filled it with the light which it alone can give. Many and many a time, did I tell my brothers and sisters of the wonderful boy, who had called up in me an admiration so intense as almost to exceed the bounds of reason. I described his figure, his brave, open face, and those eyes which had in them more than earthly light. From time to time, I had letters from him in bold, boyish handwriting, irregular, but fast becoming more like the hand of a man. Some of these were very interesting, all were frank and gen-



erous and full of the old affection which we had professed for one another at school, and which we had sworn that nothing through life should ever destroy. One thing, I, who read every word he wrote, over and over again, and read too between the lines, could not fail to note, and that was that lately, little by little, the religious enthusiasm which had marked his earlier letters seemed to be passing away. Occasionally hints were dropped that it was still doubtful as to whether he would enter the ministry or not. His intention upon leaving school had been to follow in his father's steps. But he said now, that he was not as good as he used to be. All this caused me pain in my boyish fashion, not so much, I fear, for his sake, as for my own. For he was my patron saint, my idol, and what should I do if that idol were shattered by a fall and the niche left empty?

One day, about three years after he had entered college, I received a note from him inviting me up to Oxford for a day, in order that he might show me over the place. With what alacrity I went, I can still remember. He was at the station to meet me and gave me a cordial welcome. He

was carelessly dressed in boating cap and jacket, but this only served to set off the air of distinction which marked him out from ordinary men. His face though not so boyish as at school, was fuller and handsomer; he looked healthier, but in the expression of it and in his manner there was just the slightest possible evidence of a change. I thought this was doubtless owing to my countrified appearance. Perhaps my clothes were not of the most fashionable cut. Perhaps, I thought again, it is only the natural bashfulness which affects boys, when they have not met for a long time. I must confess, for my part, to a full share of this feeling. By degrees, the strangeness, if I may call it so, wore away, and in an hour or two we were strolling along side by side and chatting freely together as of old.

He took me to his rooms, then over some of the colleges, to the High Street, Newman's, St. Mary's, and for a row on the river. I was in the seventh heaven of delight, and nothing could exceed the pride I felt, as I walked by his side and saw the looks of furtive admiration which he unconsciously elicited from the people we passed in the street.

After dinner, for the sun set late on that long June afternoon, we strolled down to Magdalen Bridge, and stood there leaning over the parapet talking, while the rich glories of the sunset lit up some flaky clouds overhead, with crimson and gold, and were reflected in the still stream below. What we had been talking about, I do not know, I think it was the subject of orders. I remember now, I had asked him if he still intended to enter the church upon leaving the University. To this, he made some evasive reply, then turned round suddenly and leaning with his back against the bridge, and looking across to the fields and towers in the distance, he said,

“By the by, old fellow, I have a confession to make. I am not quite so good as I used to be. I know it will shock you. You remember how we used to talk about knighthood and Sir Percival and the vision of the Holy Grail. We used to say that we would strive to live like Christian knights, but, Harry, old man,” and here he turned his face away and I looked steadily down at the stream, “I have been out in the world a good deal since then, and, in short, I’ve fallen from my ideal. I am

very sorry; but most men do. I would give everything I possess if I had not. Something has gone from me which can never return. They lie, who say, that such a fall does not injure a man's character. It does, it lowers him. He may repent, he may settle down in the end to quiet domestic life, but a change has passed over him. The sunny open book of his childhood has been sealed up and laid away forever. It can't be helped now, only I am different. I used to want to be very good, now I only want to be pretty good. I may be a parson some day, not an over-earnest one, but a well-meaning broad churchman, who does his best, with the necessary allowances, to restrain the animal in himself and others. Now, don't preach to me, old man, I am older than you are, and have seen more of the world; I would to God I hadn't. But I felt for old times' sake that I had to tell you. Whatever you think of me, don't give me up. This world's a bad place, Harry."

The last sentence was spoken almost to himself, and his voice struck the note of melancholy so familiar to me. He turned to go as he said it, and I followed him without speaking. There was no

danger of my preaching to him. I could not have uttered a word. Why it was, I do not know, but I had a strange, sick feeling. I suppose it was, because I loved him so. I was disappointed in him, I was angry with myself, I hated the world. A cloud seemed to have shut him off from God, and I hesitated whether to follow or to draw back. Neither spoke again for a long time, until at last he broke the silence with some trivial remark and we got on to other topics. Later on in the evening, I went with him to a wine party in the rooms of a friend of his. As soon as his surroundings were changed, and conversation drew him out, his spirits rose with a bound, and the whole evening I sat in admiration of his wit. He was the centre of attraction to all there. His handsome face, slightly flushed with wine, and his rich mellow voice drew all eyes towards him. But something spoilt the pleasure of the evening to me. One thought gnawed like a canker at my heart, even when I strove most to forget it. A death's head seemed to me to be at the feast. There was something hollow in all the mirth, a suggestion of the presence of the evil one. Nor did this feeling

wear away till I knelt by my bed in the hotel at which I stayed, and prayed the pure prayers my mother had taught me, and asked my Heavenly Father's blessing on my friend's future course.

### CHAPTER III.

**T**HE next summer I remember very well, on account of an outbreak of cholera which came from the Continent, and did great havoc in our large cities, and caused some deaths and much anxiety in the country villages. Hazlewood ran down to see us for a few days in the middle of July. He had just taken his degree, and his mind was much troubled at times as to his future course. He had sufficient private income to enable him to live in tolerable comfort, so that he looked upon a profession rather as an opportunity for work, than as a means of earning his living. Our home was in Essex, in a small rural parish not far from London. It was not on the line of railway, a fact which added to the primitive condition of the place and to its isolation. I have often wondered how my father, active man that he was, could have spent thirty-six years in it without any longer change than a fortnight's holiday in the summer,

and an occasional visit to London. Hazlewood appeared to enjoy the quiet, he lounged about on the grass or lay in the hammock and smoked, almost all day. In the house, his manners were charming. His popularity at Oxford had not spoiled him. He came into our family circle and took his place as though he were one of us. He played and romped with the children, and told them stories. With the girls he was always on the best of terms. His manner towards them was courteous and hearty, and though the long country walks which he took with them, he must often have found very dull, he never by word or look appeared bored by their unsophisticated conversation. My father took great delight in talking over college life with him, for my father was himself an Oxford man; and into the deepest questions of politics and theology, the good man's pet subjects, Hazlewood entered with a judgment and originality quite amazing. Not infrequently after dinner, I have allowed the two to go off by themselves into the library, to look up undisturbed the passages and authorities, to which reference had been made during the day. But his manner towards my mother,



delighted me most. To her he was specially courteous and deferent. There was something entrancing in the chivalrous affection with which he regarded her. Did she need a chair under the garden trees, in an instant he had fetched one. Did she in her sweet, gentle manner, suggest an opinion on some point under discussion, in a moment his eyes were bent earnestly upon her with an admiration that had in it nothing of arrogance or patronage. It was no wonder then that every member of the household took this handsome, clever youth, straightway into his or her heart and felt the sun less bright when he was gone.

He came with us regularly to the daily services, and chose out for himself a little seat on the left of the deep chancel, which was partly concealed from view by an old tomb, surmounted by the effigy of a knight in armour, supposed to be one of the ancestors of the Sefton-Mallocks, the present lords of the manor, from whom my father had the living. Over this little seat was a deep-set Norman window, filled with the fragments of old glass, which had been picked up in the church during its restoration, and put together for the sake of preservation

in what was decidedly a pleasing medley. From where I sat further down in the choir stalls, I could see the light of the late afternoon sun strike through the window at evensong, and clothe the old yellow marble tomb and the noble quiet face of Hazlewood, as with a glory not of earth.

On Sunday, he came with us to the early Eucharist, and after service waited with me at the vestry door till my father should come out. Our way to the Vicarage lay over the fields and by a little piece of water denominated, no one knew why, Solomon's Pond. The morning was clear and lovely. The air was full of the scent of flowers from the seed farms in the neighbourhood, and was doubtless doubly sweet after the musty old church, which always *did* smell, my father used to say, of the dark ages. The birds were singing joyously, and there was scarcely a cloud in the sky. Altogether it was one of those mornings on which God seems very near, and on which it is no effort to lift up one's heart to Him. Nature, and even our bodily life, raise us up, as though at such times there is vouchsafed to the soul a foretaste of that transformed earth, which is one day to take the place of this.

We had not waited many minutes before my father joined us, and handing me the box containing the Communion Vessels, which for safety's sake we always kept at the Vicarage, walked on slightly in front with my friend. I was too much occupied with my thoughts to notice what conversation was being held by those in front, till I heard my father say,

“Yes, I would never do or say anything to force a man to enter the priesthood. He must feel drawn towards it by the hand and voice of God. Circumstances must indicate the choice, and the inner call certify it. I have never forgotten one grand sermon which I heard Newman preach at St. Mary's. It was on the divine guidance, and was in illustration of so simple a subject as God's leading the children of Israel by the pillar of cloud and fire. The lesson has been with me ever since, and in the smallest matters I endeavour to see God's hand. Newman drew a striking thought from the dual nature of the leading, cloud and fire, according to the necessities of the hour. Sometimes we are guided by the light before us, sometimes by that light being made a darkness. But

my dear fellow," (my father always spoke to a young man as though he were young himself, he never spoke down to him) "the responsibility of rejecting a call to higher things is equally as great as the choice of the higher life without the true call from God. If you have ever seriously intended to take orders, do not lightly, from fear of making a false step, lay that intention aside."

"Yes, sir, I have often felt that," Hazlewood said, "I have prayed to be guided aright, and sometimes I feel that I must be a clergyman. I feel that to choose the lower, would have a paralyzing effect on my whole religious life. And yet again there are moments in which all my religion seems to go, and the world only appears worth living for. At such times the quiet, uneventful life of a clergyman fills me with dread. I fancy I should die under the monotony. If I could live such days as I have lived here, all my life, I should have no fear. But I am going back to the world and to temptation, and from past experience I know that I shall fall. Surely it is almost a dishonour to God for one so weak and changeable to think of setting himself up as a guide to others."

"Well," my father said, "I fancy that wavering of spirit between God and the world, is a trial to every beginner in the Christian fight; but if the heart be right and pure, it gets less and less a trouble, and faith grows stronger and more fixed. I do not condone the evil or sin, for of course it is an evil, but I say it is natural, and therefore may be remedied by God's grace. Pray, my dear fellow, pray for light and strength, and then believe that both will be granted."

"Thank you, sir," said Hazlewood, as they entered the gate which led into the Vicarage garden, "I will think over what you have said. I hope it will all come right, rather I hope that I shall come all right."

That afternoon as Elton and I were lying out on the grass near the summer house, smoking, he said to me,

"Did you hear our conversation as we came home from church this morning? I love to talk to your father about religion. I have never heard anyone speak with such sincerity of heart. There is something in his manner which makes you feel at once that the man is giving utterance to the real feelings in his soul."

"Yes, I have often felt that," I said, "I wonder at times what I should have been like, if I had not had such a father."

"In our talk this morning," he continued, "I am afraid I must have seemed a thorough hypocrite. I know that I led him to think me better than I am. But somehow or other, I could not tell him what was in my mind. Do you know my alternative course, if I do not enter the Church? It is not journalism, as I once thought, but the stage."

"The stage!"

"Yes, I think I should make a better actor than parson. And you know, Harry, there is a grand opening there for a good work. I certainly think that the power of the stage, were it used rightly, would do more to revive religion in England than almost anything else."

"This is only one of your dreams, Elton."

"No, it isn't. Of course I have not decided; I may even yet be a parson. This pure life here has done me a world of good, but I must see how I feel after I get back to town. One thing I have settled and that is, that if I am not a parson, I shall be an actor."

He appeared to be bent upon this course, and the next day as I drove him to the station, he was full of what was to me, this new idea of the stage. He spoke hopefully of the future, and was enthusiastic on the subject of the moral power for good of which the stage is capable.

It was with deep sorrow that the family bid him farewell. They all loved him, the elders as a son, the children as a brother, and that night at prayers, my father, in his old-fashioned way, introduced a collect which each one felt was intended as a prayer for the departed guest.

## CHAPTER IV.

**T**HERE are three ways in which we may get to know a human soul—love, personal converse, and correspondence. Love opens the door of the heart, and puts the eyes on the watch to catch what is good and noble, and even the symptoms of wrong, which give us pain, in the beloved one. Personal converse enables us to trace the subtle changes to which the character is subject, and to note the harmony of proportions, and general tone which distinguish it. Correspondence gives us an insight into the settled habits of thought, when the mind plays freely without check or stimulus from contact with another mind. We cannot truly be said to know anyone until in addition to our personal converse, we have had experience of him in a long course of letter writing. I have often been struck by the startling difference between the image conceived in my mind of one whom I had known only by meeting him, and the



image conveyed to me afterwards in his correspondence. Though the two letters that follow cannot of course reveal all Hazlewood's mental characteristics, they nevertheless let us see his state of mind at the time, and the topics which were then chiefly interesting to him. The first letter was written from London, a day or two after his return to town from his visit to us.

LONDON.

JULY, 18—

*My dear old fellow.*

Since I left you there has been a rapid change of plans, and instead of going to the Lakes for the summer on a walking tour, as I had at first intended, Byrne and I are to start to-morrow for St. Maddo on the Cornish coast, where his uncle has a place. Afterwards, we shall proceed to the continent. We intend to make Switzerland our goal, and work up to it through France. Paris for a time will be our headquarters, and from thence we shall make pilgrimages into the country round about. It will be my first visit to the continent, and I am almost wild with anticipation. The flavour of your sweet home life is still round me, and I shall never forget those happy peaceful days I passed with you. They did me a world of good. They shewed me what life may be to those who love God. It is such a pity that religion is set before men primarily as a means to righteousness, instead of a means to happiness. It loses by this. Few men want to be righteous, unless already under the influence of religion, whereas all men, bad and good, want to be happy. In this age when the light of reason and science is focussed

on the present world, human happiness stands out as a far more important factor in the mundane organization than human righteousness. Therefore, I am sure, religion would gain in popularity if its votaries set it before men as *the* road to happiness, and if they themselves made it a prime duty to reveal practically to a sorrowful world, the happiness which it bestows. Perhaps you do not think that the world is sorrowful. Perhaps you do not feel the weariness and blankness which at times steal over the soul, and make it void. But that only proves what I say. You live in an atmosphere of religion. It is interwoven with your daily life. But think of the millions of starved souls who crave satisfaction and find it only in the gratification of the senses, those lower channels of pleasure which depend upon the state of the bodily system. In strength, in the exuberance of health, the vicious may for a time find satisfaction through the indulgence of passion, but the day comes when the channels are relentlessly shut, and in the darkness of the end, just when the soul would have something to fall back upon, it lies there helpless, facing death and the black horror of despair. I believe if we could only see into the inner hearts of men, especially of those who are living without God in the world, and making a fair show of gaiety, we should find, that behind all the lightsome foreground of pleasure, there loomed up perpetually, this background of darkness, like a thunder cloud which rolls over the city at evening and makes the world colourless. Don't say that this is only my morbid temperament coming out. Ask any one you like to strike on a piano or organ the chord that best represents the undertones of emotion, which in a perpetual harmony make up the separate moments of his consciousness, and in nine cases out of ten, you will find it will be a minor one. By the by, perhaps he won't give you a minor cue, because he will say it makes him

feel sad. But that again proves what I say. Had there not lurked this sorrow in his soul, the minor chord would not have called it forth. What this note of sadness is caused by, I do not know. I think it is the consciousness of never ending change, and the Nemesis that must overtake all we love, all we do, all we are. In the experience of every thoughtful man there comes a moment when the soul realizes life and death as they are in themselves, apart from the thoughts and aspirations which fill our waking as well as our dreaming hours. From that moment the man is a changed being; life is in a measure spoilt to him. The words "What shall it profit?" "What shall it profit?" ring in his ears like a death-knell, and form a solemn undertone amid the laughter of mirth, and the plaudits of success. You remember how Mill in his autobiography describes his experience of such a state of mind. He believes that among Evangelical Protestants it is such a spiritual condition which precedes the phenomenal exaltation of so-called conversion. In my own life, I can distinctly remember such a moment of awakening. It was at the sea side, when I was about seventeen. I was reading "My Novel" and had arrived at that part where Audley Egerton feels himself grasped in the power of an incurable disease. Suddenly, by some spiritual *legerdemain*, his sensations became mine, and dropping the book, I sat in blank horror, facing death. All pleasure, all hope, all ambition were blighted in an instant, and the exceeding narrowness of my coffin and the load of earth above, oppressed and stifled me. It was days before the feeling wore away, and it has never completely gone, but returns at unexpected moments, oftentimes when I should have imagined it was farthest off. Life has never been the same to me since. I fancy that most men are haunted in this way by phantoms in the soul. Perhaps it is just as well that they are. It was never intended

that earthly life should satisfy us. Here, then, the province of religion comes in. Though all else change, it will abide. "*Stat crux dum volvitur orbis,*" that thought is full of comfort. In a world in which the whole of our mental life is but states of consciousness produced by phases of being in nature or ourselves, it is a grand privilege for the soul to realize that there is an external absolute fact—God, unchanging, unending, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," to which it may turn in emergencies, to whom it may cling in death. The life of one who can do this must be nobler, purer, and above all happier, than that of other men. Your own family life in its peace and purity has brought this truth home to me. Never shall I forget it and I hope the good it did me will be lasting. But I am so miserably weak and wavering, and am so naturally bad, everything seems to pull me down so easily. However, some day I hope it will all come right.

In the meantime, to return from airy abstractions, please give my kindest remembrances, may I say love? to your dear father and mother, and every other member of your family. It is strange you don't like Byrne. I know you don't, so you need not say that you do. I also know why, you cannot trust him. I had that feeling at first but it has worn away. He is one of the most fascinating fellows I have ever met. Don't get jealous, old man, he and you affect me differently. I don't like him in the same way at all! but still I like him and he sticks close to me. We have a great deal in common, too much perhaps. I think if I might classify you two, I should put you down as my good, and Byrne as my evil genius. And yet I know this is hard and unjust. What I mean is, each of you in friendship, satisfies one part of my character, you the higher and B. the lower. Yet I feel that even this is unjust to him. I had better say no more. Good-

night, old man, and forgive this rambling epistle, which is more of an essay on religion, or ethics, or anything else than a letter to a friend. But I like to pour out my ideas to you as you know. I enclose some verses which I wrote in a pious mood on the train to town. Your mother may like to see them. Again good-night.

Your affectionate friend,

E. H.

The verses enclosed were the following. I am not a judge of poetry, so I cannot pronounce on their literary merit, but they seem to me to be very beautiful, and because they come from the heart to the heart.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock."

REV. III. 20.

"I heard a voice at midnight, and it cried,  
O weary heart, O soul for which I died,  
Why wilt thou spurn my wounded hands and side?"

"Is there a heart more tender, more divine,  
Than that sad heart which gave itself for thine?  
Could there be love more warm, more full than mine?"

"What other touch can still thy trembling breath  
What other hand can hold thee after death?  
What bread so sweet to him that hungereth?"

"Warm is thy chamber, soft and warm thy bed,  
Bleak howling winds are round the path I tread,  
The son of man can nowhere lay his head,

"Wilt thou not open to me? To and fro  
I wander weary through the driving snow,  
But colder still that thou wouldst spurn me so.

"I have a crown more bright than all that be,  
I have a kingdom wider than the sea,  
But both have I abandoned, seeking thee.

"Poor weary heart so worn and sad within,  
Oh, open to thy friend, thy stay from sin,  
That I with all my love may enter in."

"I heard a voice at midnight and I cried,  
O Lord, I need thy wounded hands and side,  
I need thy love, Lord enter and abide."

Of the man Byrne, whom he mentions, I must say this much in passing, that I did not like him. I thought him untrustworthy from the moment I saw him. How far my judgment was correct and my fears for his influence over Hazlewood were justified, future chapters in this biography will show. It was at his rooms in Oxford the wine party was held which I have mentioned. What there was about the man that made me distrust him, I did not know. He was clever and handsome, but I instinctively shrank from him. I

felt at once that he was bad. I could not understand how Hazlewood had succumbed to his influence. I see it all clearer now, but at that time it was a mystery to me. I should have said that, were such a thing possible, Byrne was a man created without a soul. He had the highest human bodily development, he had very high mental powers, but he was only a beautiful animal, he was not a man. There appeared to be in him no trace of the image of God, however defaced. He had passion, without love; intellect, without reason; beauty, without grace; the faculty of speech, without the sense of truth; freedom of will, without the sense of moral responsibility; the power of hate, without the power to sympathize. However I must not anticipate. I merely say this here in order to explain Hazlewood's letter and also the presentiment of coming evil which haunted me for days after hearing that Byrne was to accompany him to the continent. The letter which follows I received about a fortnight or so afterwards. It may perhaps be thought a trifle too long to have been inserted in full, but I print it nevertheless as it reveals the other side of Hazle-

wood's character, the artistic side, which it would be unjust in a biographer to pass over.

AUGUST, 18—

THE LOUVRE, PARIS.

*My dear old fellow.*

Here I am, pen in hand, before that master piece of human art—the Venus of Milo. I have taken out my tablet to write to you, and at the same time while away the hour and a half to dinner when I expect Byrne to turn up. He was out some where or other all last night. We do not enquire into each other's movements. I think it is wiser not to do so when two fellows are travelling together. However, exit Byrne, and now let me have you all to myself. First, let me describe my surroundings in order to explain this letter and what called it forth. I am sitting at one end of a bench, tolerably comfortable (a matter of no interest to you and of much to me). Before me, within a little railing, is the Venus. She stands out white and lovely against a rich crimson plush curtain. At the other end of the bench on which I sit (it is a very long bench you may be sure) is an old peasant woman, waiting for her octogenarian husband who is hobbling about in juvenile inquisitiveness, among the Greek crudities and nudities in the other rooms. Here then, I am alone in the presence of two females. Both are old, both bear traces of time's blighting touch. Both are silent, and seem wrapped in the contemplation of objects beyond our ken. One is cold and hard but beautiful and white. The flesh of the other is warm and soft but it is ugly and brown. The breasts of the one have suckled no children as the long years have died away, while the other bears all the evidences of maternity and her now poor withered bosom has many times over been the cradle of future nations. The brow of



the one is calm, cloudless and stamped with immortal serenity ; the face of the other is ruffled into a thousand little furrows, as though the cares and troubles of eighty years had run hither and thither over it, blighting the flesh and eating their way through it like sparks in a piece of burnt paper. The meditation of one is rapt, majestic, the uplifting of the soul towards the ideal and unattainable ; the meditation of the other is rapt and calm, but it is the outcome of vacuity of thought, the oppression of fatigue. One stands out in semi-nudity, but withal chaste and grand, the other is wrapped bountifully in blue homespun, with even the head, all, save the brown wrinkled face and its crown of silvery hair, bound tightly in the white folds of a grandmother's cap. To complete the difference, one has arms and the other has not. Surely here is a splendid contrast. What could be better ! Before me is ideality, beside me on the bench, (flavoured with garlic, by the by,) is reality. To sit here is an inspiration. Here is life, there is art. This is a grand opportunity to sketch to you my theory (it may be the theory of others for all I know, but I call it *my* theory because I thought it out for myself) of the origin and true function of art. Let us start then at the bottom of the ladder, at that point in the evolution of man in which sexual generation took the place of cellular germination from within. As soon as life was made to depend on sexual instincts, the power of sympathy, the power to respond to the feelings of others, to experience the same passions at the same moment, was made a prime necessity of existence. In time, this power of sympathy became intensified by natural selection ; it became widened in its range, it became elevated above the mere natural animal instincts in their grossest forms. Other desires and emotions, than merely sexual ones began to be imparted to the more sensitive of our ancestors. Grace, ease, comfort, happiness were reflected back to them

from others. All this of course must have taken ages to bring about. Then comes a further step when by generalization men began to abstract mentally, the particular motions, attitudes, gestures, colours and facial expressions the perception of which in others caused certain sensations in themselves. Then ages afterwards, sculptors began to represent these symbols, or what I will call concrete equivalents of emotion, on creations of their own in order to stir up the emotions they desired to produce in the minds of others by the power of sympathy. But these equivalents of emotion were not only embodied in the creations of the sculptor, painter and poet. Even in architecture, that form of art which seems furthest removed from analogy to human conditions, success depends upon their proper adjustment and use. The architecture of each nation reveals to us those emotions which it is the habit of its people to enjoy most. Gothic is the architecture of nations who demand ease, vastness, variety and power, but power only as the result of intelligent arrangement and proportion, for a waste of power is an evidence of weakness. The emotions which these qualities inspire in man are produced by the flowing tracery, the perpetual suggestion by the arches of infinite curves, the wise adaptation of slender columns and vaulted roof, as adequate means to an end. Oriental nations enjoy rich and gorgeous colouring, huge pillars and oppressive domes, for among them power is despotic and presses down upon the foundations of society, without restraint from reason or proportion, and the people love to have it so. Let us come to the conclusion to which I was bringing you, or wanted to bring you, for I feel that what I have said is very crude. It is for that reason I wrote it to you. I wanted to arrange the matter more clearly in my own mind. To conclude, in sculpture, painting, poetry, and even in architecture, the work of the artist is the expressing of forms of emotion

by the presentment of their concrete equivalents, in order to stir up, through the innate power of sympathy, these emotions in other men. Here then we see the difference between life and art. Life is complete in itself, art can never be, should never be. The scope of art is not the world of matter, it is the world of mind. Matter is only needful to art as the vehicle for conveying thoughts and emotions from mind to mind. Realism is not true art, because it makes more of the vehicle conveying, than of the message conveyed. It attempts to create living things in the world of life, instead of living things in the world of mind. Life and art are therefore essentially opposite. In life we work with numbers, in art with  $x$ 's and  $y$ 's. Life is arithmetic, art algebra; one concrete the other abstract. But I am getting further and further out of my depth; and the poor, old woman has gone without my knowing it, and the rooms are being deserted, and Venus stands out silent and spectral. I must go before I am turned out.

Byrne and I have made some nice acquaintances here, though nearly everybody is away. I had the great privilege of an introduction the other day to H. Errington. He was over here getting up some part in *Louis XI.* which is to be produced in London next winter. He has asked me to call on him when I return, and has partly promised me an opening in his company, if I can satisfy his requirements. This looks as if I were in earnest, doesn't it?

By the by, Errington is an old friend of Lady Massy's in my father's parish, so I may have interest there. With love to you and yours,

Your affectionate friend.

E. H.

## CHAPTER V.

**T**HERE was nothing surprising in Hazlewood's success as an actor. He had all the exterior qualifications for his art, personal beauty, grace and majesty of bearing. He had also all the requisite mental powers, intellectual mobility, quick sympathy, clearness of vision, imagination and self confidence. The actor's life by its excitement and applause supplied to him, as no other profession could, that continual stimulus which his nature required. From his first entrance upon it therefore, he trod the stage with a firm step, the step of a master. His rise was rapid. In a few years he was at the head of his profession. His pieces ran on for hundreds of nights. The old Tragedy Theatre in the Strand, which he had renovated and made his own, was crowded nightly. Statesmen, musicians, poets, sculptors, sat in wonder at the youthful hero who seemed the embodiment of their dreams of greatness and beauty. Their souls were

caught up by his, as in a magic whirlwind, and he bore them far away beyond the confines of earth, to a paradise where all was young and beautiful, where desire never failed, where glorious visions never faded, and where he reigned king over the sky and earth, the land and sea, the flowers and loves of perpetual spring. There was no conscious effort in his work. As soon as he had conceived a character as a whole, he became it, he lived and moved and breathed it. Every gesture, every act, had a new significance. Hazlewood had melted away, and a new being, a knight of the middle ages, a crusader king, an Egyptian priest, an old Roman, a Greek hero, a Norse demi-god, or whatever was the rôle he was playing, stood before you. You were awed in his presence. As he moved across the stage, you felt the earth shake with the tread of medieval armies, you smelt the dry hot smells of Syrian plains, or you gazed wonderingly into far depths of sky from the peaks of Olympus, or you heard the splash and roar of ocean round the bleak Northern headlands. Because he felt and saw these things, you felt and saw them through him. Out of the dull common

places of existence, men and women were caught up into this world of art. They lived for a time in a different atmosphere. Their hearts throbbed with bursts of divine passion and scorn, which they had never dreamt of in their stiff black and white social life. Their beings vibrated under his power as the dull wood and metal of an organ quiver to the glorious conceptions of harmony which a master mind and touch pour through them. The reader must not suppose that this was accomplished without continual study on Hazlewood's part. Doubtless he worked in the same fierce and all-consuming manner which generally characterized the actions of his genius. The chief difficulty he experienced in acquiring his mastership as an actor was in overcoming that defect in his composition to which I have alluded, his lack of the power of continuity. He found it difficult to sustain the level of his acting. On one night, when the mood bore him away and lifted him to supreme success, he was magnificent. But on the next night, when the mood came not, it was hard not to fail. By study, this difficulty was gradually overcome, and he obtained a mastery over his moods, by which in a

measure he could control and even induce them. To the end, however, friends have assured me, that by the presence or absence of a magnetic power which kept the audience spell-bound for hours, they could always tell whether Hazlewood was in the mood or not. The piece which made the greatest impression upon me was *Henry the Fifth*. I do not know whether there is much in the play as it stands, for it is impossible for me to judge impartially of it now, because I can see it only as Hazlewood revealed it. To me, his acting was the incarnation of nobility. His youth and grace were charming and his kingly bearing made you feel better and nobler for having beheld it. He was no longer Hazlewood, he was *Henry the Fifth*, the crown of chivalry, the conqueror of France. Had he called me I would have rushed on the stage and kissed his hand, or knelt before him and received the badge of knighthood. Every attitude and movement was in perfect consonance with his part. The effect produced upon the mind by his shining armour and his dark earnest face, I shall never forget, when in the charge before Harfleur, the king, fired with courage, and the determination bred of

the consciousness of a right cause, cries to his followers, his voice half drowned in the roar of cannon, his sword held aloft flinging back through the smoke of battle the flames of the beleaguered city ;

“ And you, good yeomen,  
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here  
The mettle of your pasture : Let us swear  
That you are worth your breeding, which I doubt not,  
For there is none of you so mean and base  
That hath not noble lustre in his eyes,  
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips  
Straining upon the start ; the game’s afoot.  
Follow your spirit and upon this charge  
Cry—“ God for Harry, England, and St. George.”

I could have followed him on such a charge up to the very flaming breach of a forlorn hope. And never shall I forget the look of heroism and devotion, so full of melancholy, and the loneliness of greatness, when in the open field at Agincourt, on the eve of the battle, the king, left alone, lifts up his face to the dark sky and prays to the King of kings, in whose hands are the issues of life and death ;



“O God of battles, steal my soldiers' hearts,  
Possess them not with fear, take from them row,  
The sense of reckoning, if the opposed numbers  
Pluck their hearts from them; not to-day. O Lord,  
O, not to-day, think not upon the fault  
My father made in compassing the crown.”

One curious coincidence, as the reader will see it to be afterwards, was that Byrne took the part of Lord Scroop, one of the conspirators against Henry in the pay of France. It is only a very minor part, but so real was the tender scorn with which the king upbraided his friend's perfidy, that at the time, it was to me unaccountably touching. Now, as I look back upon it, it seems a curious foreshadowing of the end, and my belief inclines me to acknowledge such prophecies going before, to be not unusual in the course of life. The more I think of it, the stranger the scene becomes. Scroop, the convicted villain, stood there before the king, and Henry, who had dismissed the cases of the other conspirators, could hardly repress the outburst of anger and disappointment which shook his frame. He almost cried, tears certainly stood in his eyes, as in a slow and broken voice he said while the audience were hushed and silent as the grave :

“ But oh,  
What shall I say to thee, Lord Scroop, thou cruel,  
Ingrateful savage and inhuman creature,  
Thou that didst bear the key of all my counsels,  
That knewst the very bottom of my soul,  
That almost might have coined me into gold,  
Wouldst thou have practised on me for thy use?  
May it be possible that foreign hire  
Could out of thee extract one spark of evil  
That might annoy my finger? 'Tis so strange  
That though the truth of it stands off as gross  
As black from white, my eye will scarcely see it;  
Oh, how hast thou with jealousy infected  
The sweetness of affianced  
Shew men dutiful,  
Why so didst thou, seem they grave and learned,  
Why so didst thou, come they of noble family,  
Why so didst thou, seem they religious,  
Why so didst thou; Scroop, I will weep for thee,  
For this revolt of thine methinks is like  
Another fall of man.”

I saw Henry V. three times altogether. The last time was in May 18— I had some business in the city and saw Hazlewood in the afternoon. He had a large suite of rooms in an old fashioned house on one of the streets which run down from the Strand to what is now the embankment. From the windows of the rooms on one side, there was a grand view of the river, and at evening of the

magnificent cloud-effects in the sky behind the towers of the Houses of Parliament. The rooms were exquisitely fitted up in Moorish style and luxury. Rich lamps, odd little windows dimmed with the gorgeous emblaznry of jewelled glass, art treasures and curios, life-size statues here and there of the Greek Gods, oriental rugs and draperies, and pastilles burning faintly with glow-worm light in the recesses of the silent rooms, were more like a dream of the Arabian nights than a modern abode in the metropolis. After the play on the night in question, Hazlewood took me home with him to supper. He had been a splendid success. Never had I seen him, and I often ran up from Beaconshurst to "The Tragedy," to be fired and stimulated by a brief admission to hero-land, never had I seen him in better form. I had sat there entranced. The audience were enthusiastic. They hung upon his every word, they strained their eyes to catch his every gesture. He was rapturously applauded after the last act, much to my delight, as I looked down in admiration on the knightly figure, and thought of our boyhood and how intimately we had known each other, then and in the

years since, and that he was still my dearest friend. We walked to his rooms down the noisy Strand. The street was crowded with people pouring out of the different theatres, but the air was refreshing and the press and noise of human life lessened the mental reaction after the play. Hazlewood was still under the intoxication of triumph. His mind worked rapidly. His ideas were lit up with the brilliance of genius. His words came with a grandeur and eloquence which graven instantly upon the memory. He had not quite gone back to himself. It was Henry V. in disguise who crossed fearlessly the stream of cabs and carriages. We had supper in his rooms; his man servant waited upon us. Hazlewood partook but lightly of the meal, but drank heartily of some rare French wine. After supper we lounged on sofas in his study and sipped our coffee while we smoked. Then he settled down to talk. "Vane," he said, "I know what you are thinking of in your pious parson's way, you are thinking what an extraordinary life an actor's is. I fancy in some ways you envy me, don't you?"

"Well, I think in the line of life you have

chosen for yourself, you are extremely favoured and fortunate."

"Yes, that is what I mean. Now, at the risk of being charged with egotism, will you let me tell you my inner feelings and aspirations, and how the stage appears to me. Don't mind interrupting me if I begin to bore you, and give me permission on my part to wake you up if you go to sleep. Let me ring for another cup of coffee so that you may have strength to hear me to the end.

"Acting is a form of art, but it is the lowest form, then comes music, then painting and sculpture and then poetry. This is not a capricious order, it does not depend upon personal preference. I myself appreciate acting more than poetry. But I take it, that that form of art must be the highest, the enjoyment of which depends least upon the sensuous nature of the percipient, because intellectual pleasures are the only ones which grow intenser as life goes on, and the bodily powers decay. Acting reaches the intellect, but it does so only if the three channels of speech, sight, and hearing are in good working order. A blind man who enjoys hearing a play read, enjoys the

poetry of it, not the acting. Music does not presuppose the faculty of speech, but its effects entirely depend upon the possession of what is called a musical ear, a possession which many great and morally sane men have not, and which many small and morally insane men have. Painting I put lower than sculpture, because it involves colour as well as form, two separate channels of sensuous emotion. A blind man again who enjoys the description of a painting, is not moved by the picture, but the poetical emotion which it contains. In poetry, however, emotions are repeated almost instantaneously as by a mystical telegraphy along the wire of rhythmical language. The sensations of pleasure are purely the result of intellectual and not sensuous perception, unless of course we are to regard the rhythmical effect as sensuous. But it seems to me that the pleasure which comes even from form and metre in poetry, is an intellectual pleasure, derived from the appreciation of the divine fitness and arrangement of the words to the thoughts. That rhythm has probably a deeper origin, I allow, but what that origin is I do not know. Sometimes I think that the whole order of

recurring changes in nature is a divine rhythm, and is music and poetry in the ears of God. May not the love of rhythm in man be a feeble echo of this?

“Hallo, Harry, are you going to sleep?”

“No, I’m not, go on.”

“Well, I must leave poetry, and confine myself to my own art. Acting, inasmuch as it appeals so strongly to the senses, is more immediately powerful in its effects than other and higher branches of art. But by the law of equalization what it gains in concentration of power, it loses in extent and duration. Its effects are rapid, but they are evanescent. They reach only a comparatively few. The actor at death leaves behind him no part of himself or his art, save what lingers in the memory of former spectators, and a bubble reputation as a successful player. He cannot hope, as a poet can, to arouse noble and inspiring thoughts, and create worlds of beauty in the minds of men and women, hundreds of years after his death in the wilds of Australia or in the back woods of Canada. No, he is blessed because he has his reward, but he cannot expect more. Within these necessary limi-

tations, however, acting is a grand art. Now, to-night, I lived and moved in a world which never existed, in a realm of glory and imagination, and I felt that I carried the people with me. *I* was the King there. The Prince in his box forgot for a time and looked down upon me as the true monarch. He did me unconscious homage in his heart. And from the Princes in the royal box to the poorest crossing-sweeper in the gods, every heart thrilled with noble aspirations. Sordid city men forgot the rise and fall of stocks and the prices of flour and pork. Withered old dowagers forgot that their comeliness of figure was owing to the skill of the dressmaker, and their blushes and bloom the result of rouge. Young girls who *were* lovely, forgot that the scene before them was only wood and canvas and paint and gaslight, and one and all felt the enthusiasm of a chivalry which the world has never, and can never, experience, which is only possible in the world of art. Yes, there was not a man or woman, a boy or girl, in the place, who did not for the time love me madly, passionately, beyond the bounds of reason or control, in that wild way in which the soul of Schu-



bert loves, as it rushes on impetuously, without restraint, through his Sonatas. I felt and knew my power; I held the people entranced. It seemed so perfectly easy. I could raise my voice and the house would tremble, I dropped it to a whisper, and a thousand hearts stopped beating. I grew desperate in my power. I toyed with it. The audience and its applause were nothing to me. I was supreme, far, far above it. Every heart there was bound by invisible cords immediately to mine. I could have gone to the front and, without speaking, held up my little finger, and thousands of eyes would have watched the motion, trifling and ridiculous as it would have been, with the eagerness with which men in Parliament, at a critical moment, scan the expression of their leader's face.

“I have given you now a description of an actor's feelings. Can anything be more delightful? Can power ever be more absorbing? Can any work, less, of course, than cleric's work, be more noble than to lift up, as I know I did to-night, gross, sordid hearts with emotions which must, as a grand memory, cling to them in after life? Don't you

think me very conceited to be talking to you in this way?"

"No, I don't, Elton, I know you are just opening up to me your inner feelings, and in some way, as you were acting this evening, a dim consciousness of what they were came over me. As you say, this subtle power must be intoxicating."

"Yes, it is. But do you remember that I used to tell you that my brain was haunted by a thought, or the ghost of a thought, which spoilt all life to me at the pinnacle of its successes?"

"Yes, perfectly."

"Well, the thought or the feeling came over me to-night, in the midst of the play. It came upon me suddenly, with a click, as I used to say. It was in that scene between Henry and Catherine. Just when all eyes were upon me, I felt the ice of the shadow fall across my soul."

He raised himself on his elbow and looked across at me as he said this with an expression of intense melancholy.

"Yes, it was icy," he continued, "it almost staggered me. For a moment I could not speak, but it passed away again, leaving my soul tired

and empty. And what do you think it was? It was the thought of the end, the tedious death-bed, the fading daylight, the rattle in my throat, the final agony, the struggle and the dark grave."

He spoke very solemnly and with an absent air, as though while talking to me he was looking at something else.

"Yes, Harry, after all, *you* have chosen the better part."

## CHAPTER VI.

**H**AZLEWOOD'S marriage was as much a surprise to me, I had almost said shock, as anything which happened in his checquered history. Why it should have surprised me, I do not know, but it seemed to bring him down to earth. He had been to me before an ethereal being, one set apart above our ordinary commonplace life and affections. It was a world in which love might enter as a pure, divine emotion, but marriage never. It was like the prose paraphrase of a grand poem. It was one thing to know Hazlewood loved and another to know he wanted to get married. Perhaps, too, there lurked a little jealousy in my heart and a fear lest his marriage should do what mine had not, put an end to our friendship. Even while I had these thoughts, my reason convinced me that they were foolish and wrong. In spite of his ideality and my idealization of him, Hazlewood was a man after all ; and

why should he not enjoy that greatest of all mundane blessings, domestic love and life. As a Christian priest, I should be the last one to speak derogatively of Holy Marriage. But I write my thoughts to show how Hazlewood appeared to me, and that my sense of his superiority and spirituality was still dominant. There are few who are so free from superstition as not to look for omens on their wedding day. Strangely prophetic were those on that twentieth day of November. The dawn rose red and foreboding. For a few moments only, two long streaks of light broke horizontally through the banks of dull slate-coloured clouds which blocked the path of day. These rays striking upon some white cloud masses in the West were reflected upon the earth, reversing the shadows of trees and other objects in the landscape, producing a weird sensation in the mind, as though one were in a dream and saw things backwards. Nature appeared as though it were evening, while the mind knew that it was morning. These rays were soon withdrawn, and the cloud openings closed up, and the world became a dull grey. The air was sultry, and the sea, which had been noisy all night,

broke unceasingly in a dirge-like monotony. I suppose there had been a storm out in mid ocean some days before, and the rollers we saw had been caused by it, as there was little wind to speak of on shore. In the garden, and round the church, save for this sea-roar, there was a deathlike stillness. Traces of summer were still visible in the green of the grass and shrubs, but the whole earth looked sepulchral and bare. Its sorrow and desolation seemed of a sudden to have become oppressively patent. It was like the face of the dead when the sheet is pulled back, and the very resemblance of death to life suggests to us overpoweringly the difference between life and death.

I was in my study writing, when a carriage drove up to the door; there was a ring at the bell and Mr. Hazlewood, two ladies and a gentleman (the gentleman was Byrne) were announced by the maid. I was astonished beyond measure at the arrival, but the ladies entered and were introduced to my wife. They were a Miss Ingoldsby and a Mrs. Carter-Savage. We sat chatting together as pleasantly as we could, while the carriage was kept waiting at the door, but we were none of us at our

ease. I did not like the women and I could see that my wife did not. Byrne, as I have said, I always distrusted and detested. Even Hazlewood did not appear at his best. Both ladies had a great deal of manner. They were very enthusiastic about the country and the "charming, old church," and the "cosy, little Vicarage." But on my life I could not discern the meaning of this early morning call. Suddenly, Hazlewood turned to me and said,

"Harry, old man, do you know what we have come for?"

The ladies, especially Miss Ingoldsby, appeared self conscious and looked on the ground, and then Mrs. Carter-Savage, raising her eyes, smiled feebly at Byrne.

"No, I don't, exactly," said I, somewhat rudely.

"Well, I, rather we, have come to get you to marry us."

"What, all four?"

"Oh, no, no thank you," said Byrne, dryly.

Whereat Mrs. Carter-Savage tossed back her dainty little head and laughed musically.

“Byrne, don't be rude,” said Hazlewood, “you are fearfully jealous, you know you are.”

Byrne smiled softly at this.

“No, Harry, not four, two, Miss Ingoldsby and myself. We wanted our marriage to be quiet, without any fuss, and so I thought Beaconhurst was the place for us. Besides, I have always promised you that you should marry me. So here we are. Now, old fellow, we haven't much time to spare,” (here he looked at his watch) “as it is already eleven and we have to drive back to Chillington in time to catch the one o'clock train. I must ask you to be quick.”

I was terribly taken aback, and could not say any pretty things, but my wife had more presence of mind and offered her congratulations. I felt disappointed, bitterly disappointed, and was sure Hazlewood had been entrapped. Miss Ingoldsby had a pretty face, but Mrs. Savage was decidedly a woman of the world, and there was something satanic in Byrne's look and manner. Yet what could I say or do?

As I led the way across the garden to the church, I felt like an executioner preceding his



victim to the block. The church was icy cold, and as I unlocked the door and entered, the warm, moist air, which rushed in after me, was instantly condensed upon the walls, and made the building damp. The place was grey and dreary, and a sparrow, which came in at the open door, just as I was beginning the Psalm, disturbed us very much, the poor thing flying about desperately like an unquiet spirit which seeks to escape from itself and cannot. It darted in and out under the arches of the nave, and then up into the chancel, where it wheeled round us several times, just escaping our heads, and then battered itself hopelessly against the east window till it fell on the altar exhausted. My wife had dragged the gardener into her service as bellows-blower, and at the close of the ceremony, in order to brighten things, struck up the wedding march. But she was not familiar with the instrument, and the gardener was less so. She pulled out a screaming stop to begin with, and the organ creaked and groaned, as poor old John emptied his own bellows in endeavoring to fill those of the instrument. To cap the climax, the damp had affected the key-board and one of the notes

cyphered with a dismal wail, which never altered or abated, till poor old John, who had nearly blown the swell-box open in his Herculean zeal, suddenly stopped from sheer exhaustion, and all the music and wailing whistled grimly and went out. Altogether it was the most dismal wedding I ever remember. The bridal party, I think, felt depressed too. Poor dear Elton looked nervous, but Mrs. Elton was strangely self-possessed. My wife offered to improvise a breakfast, but as none of the party would hear of this, after a glass of wine and some cake they left. Then the sun came out and the feeling of gloom wore away, and we were thankful that the return to Chillington would be more cheery than the drive here had been.

This touch of brightness seemed to have been more truly prophetic than the gloom, for the letters which I received from time to time were overflowing with peace and happiness. His wife was a treasure and he the most fortunate of men. She was well received in society and Mr. and Mrs. Elton Hazlewood went everywhere. His fame as an actor increased daily. "Never," the *Times* said, "have the best traditions of the English stage

been so marvellously exemplified as in the acting of Mr. Hazlewood. In him the English drama touches its high water mark." Hazlewood had built himself a house on St. John's Wood Road, and furnished it like a palace. I dined there on Sunday when I happened to be in town. Mrs. Hazlewood was very charming, but a trifle too theatrical in her manner to please me. Byrne was also there. I cannot, however, remember that anything worth repeating was said or done on that evening. About a year afterwards Hazlewood wrote in an ecstasy of joy to announce the birth of a son. Each following letter was full of the doings of this wonderful child. Then about three years after that a change came over his correspondence. His mind seemed worried and clouded, but I could not divine the cause. Then I did not hear from him for a long time, till one Wednesday afternoon in the beginning of May, I received a telegram asking me to go to him at once.

It was past nine o'clock when my cab drove up before his house in town. A page opened the door, and on learning my name escorted me down the long hall, wainscoated in black oak and hung with

shields and suits of old armour, to a deep set door behind the grand staircase. My attendant knocked, and a voice said, "come in." The boy opened the door slightly and bade me enter, then closed it at once, as soon as I was inside. The large room with its rows of book-shelves, dark hangings and sombre pictures, was dimly lit by a shaded lamp upon the table. A fire burnt low on the antique hearth, and a little terrier, which was curled up on a rug before it, rose and barked once at me as I entered. Then all was silent. At the table, his face buried in his hands, sat Elton Hazlewood. He made no movement, he uttered no word of welcome. I was so filled with alarm that I stood there speechless, unable to move hand or foot. I suppose the silence only lasted a few seconds, but it seemed ages to me. Then Elton raised his head. His face gave me a shock. He looked as if he had died and come to life again, and the shadow of death had not quite worn away. His features were ashy pale, his eyes were hollow and sunken, and burnt with an unnatural and consuming fire, but he was calm, very calm. It was the calmness which horrified me more than anything. I ran

toward him impulsively and put my arm round him.

“Elton, my dear old fellow, what has happened? Do tell me.”

He smiled cynically, and rose and stood with his back to the fire place, giving me the chair he had left. The smile was horrible, so forced, but it was nothing to the suppressed passion of the hollow voice.

“Oh, nothing much, old man, only a domestic episode, a society scandal. We shouldn't take these things too seriously, you know. Of course we shouldn't, but it's damned hard not to. Excuse me, Harry, I forgot you were a parson.”

“Don't mind, for Heaven's sake go on.”

“Oh, it's only a domestic episode, nothing more. Don't be so impatient, you will know it all in time. The papers will be full of it. Little street arabs will hawk it about town. Broken down news-vendors will scribble it in coloured chalks upon the pavements. You will know it all in time. Do you find it warm in here? I was selfish in asking you to come to-night. Your wife, I am afraid, will never forgive me for bothering you.

It was very weak of me, but I needed you. I could not trust myself alone. What nonsense! of course I could. It's nothing, it's positively nothing, but it's damned hard. Ha, ha, swearing again. Pardonnez moi, Monsieur le Pasteur."

"Elton, what has happened? Do tell me and don't talk in this wild way."

"Tell you?" he said, standing erect, his eyes flashing fire, "tell you? Do you think, you fool, that I am going to tell you more than I have? Do you think my throat is iron to utter the burning words which proclaim my shame? Do you think I could trumpet my dishonour, even to you? Guess what has happened yourself, I cannot tell you more than I have. What is it which in an instant would crush you down in youth and strength and blight your life and make you curse God? Think, say, what is it? For that is what has happened to me."

His voice rose to its full force as he said this, and his anger was so terrible that I felt a sensation of cold creeping through my veins. "I know now, Elton," I said, to calm him, "your wife,"

"Has gone," he added.

“By herself?”

“No.”

“With Byrne?”

“Yes.”

I do not know what made me say Byrne's name, but it came to my lips spontaneously, as by that mesmeric suggestiveness which we experience in moments of over excitement. “When did it happen, Elton?”

“God knows, last night, I think, while I was courting and kissing poor Marguarite's painted cheeks in Faust. She was not here when I got home. They fled at once, I have since found out, to the continent.”

“But what are you going to do about it?”

“Do? Why, let them hug and kiss each other as much as they please, and slide smoothly into damnation for it.”

“Oh, Elton, don't talk in that way.”

“Now don't begin a homily, young man. I am not myself to-night. You wouldn't be if you had gone through what I have. No man would. The whole universe has been blasted, the world and God wiped out, and I only am left, shattered

by the lightning which unfortunately does not always kill when it strikes."

"And the child?"

"Yes, she left him; poor degraded wretch, she had not even brute instinct enough to mind having him."

"Surely for the child's sake, you will make some movement in the matter."

"No, Harry, I wont, not even for the child's sake. Wait a minute and I will tell you why."

He went to a table and poured out a glass of brandy and water, which he tossed off at a gulp, and then returned to his former position before the fire.

"Why not? this is why, and it is sufficient reason to me—*because she loves him*. I found that out by accident about a month ago. Up to that time, I had loved her devotedly, I had believed in her implicitly, but with the discovery, my love vanished. I was chilled to the heart. A statue could not have been more incapable of love than I was. I was cold to her, fiendishly cold and cruel. I could not help it. I did not like to see her touch my child. She was mine no longer, she was



his. The true roots of marriage are in the soul. I knew what was coming, so I took the old nurse into my confidence, and bribed her to guard the boy. My wife noticed the change in me, and on her part, toleration turned to hate. Byrne continued to visit the house, and I did not even take the trouble to turn him out or keep them apart. Then came a scene. Harry, do you remember my making a sort of confession to you once at Oxford as we stood on Magdalen Bridge?"

"I do, distinctly."

"Did you know, I did not, till I heard it from my wife's lips, that I was a murderer? I loved a young girl there, a girl in humble circumstances; her father drove a brewer's cart, but she herself was one of those delicately refined beings who are sometimes found in the houses of the poor. My love killed her. I did not know this till my wife told me. Byrne knew it, for he left Oxford the year after I did. He told my wife. He has carried the dread secret about with him for years. It was through him that I got to know the girl. He had plotted a vile and diabolical plot from the beginning and I in my weakness and folly fell a vic-

tim to it, and became an instrument in his hands. You were right about that man. He has been a serpent in my path for years, and I have been too blind to see it. If ever a devil walks in human form, it is Byrne. I know him now. The thought of him fills me with a horror which I cannot account for. I feel as if some day, he will work my doom. It was doubtless because of his part in the affair, that he never dared to tell me the end. He alone knew it, till he told my wife, and when her lips hurled the story at me, and cut into my soul with the taunts of feminine jealousy, impotence and hate, I cowered before her, like a convicted felon, and could not utter a word in my defence. From that moment my doom was sealed. It was only a question of time. My wife and I never spoke again, and never shall. Oh, Harry, between the sense of guilt which, believe me, has haunted me night and day with a persistence that would have been impossible in the case of other men, nine out of ten of whom would have tossed it from them as a bygone folly, and the sense of present anguish as a just retribution, I am utterly crushed. When you get home, not here, I am too

wicked, you might say a prayer for me, and alter the Lord's prayer if you can "Forgive us our trespasses, even if as yet we cannot forgive them that trespass against us?"

"I will, Elton, but it can only be for a short time, the prayer must soon return to the exact words of Christ."

He did not notice this remark, but added "I leave the stage at once. When a man has once played in a real drama, he does not care for mock ones. Some men of course would not mind. That is what I have been saying to myself all day, over and over again till the noon turned to twilight and the twilight faded into dark. But I am not like other men. It would kill me. I must go, I have made my plans, and shall sell off the house and settle in the country. If there is a place near you, I will take it, and the child and I can live there in retirement. I will write for the magazines and devote myself to my boy and his education. Let us go out now, this heat and silence are insufferable. It is past twelve already, but I cannot sleep, and do not want to be left alone; so if you are not too tired, take a glass of sherry and come with me."

The disburdening of his soul had done him good. He was becoming more like himself again. The night was clear and very chilly, and the stars were shining brilliantly. As we went down the street, we turned up our coat-collars and walked for a time in silence. Hazlewood wore a soft, felt hat, which he drew down over his eyes, and whenever we met any one he lifted his shoulders till his face was half hidden in the collar of his coat, making recognition impossible. His step was quick and nervous, and we walked on down interminable streets, till I, who was not borne up by the same mental agony as he, felt thoroughly exhausted. At last we reached Oxford Street, and turned down Bond Street to Piccadilly, and then on to the Haymarket, Whitehall and Westminster Bridge. There we stopped and rested, looking over the parapet at the dark river that rushed by underneath us. All this time Hazlewood had spoken little, and that only at intervals. Now, the grandeur of this midnight scene aroused him. The clock tower of the parliament buildings stood up dark and distinct against the starlit sky, and

when the half-hour chimed—it was half past one—the vibrations floated off as if on angel's wings over the sleeping city. The river was black, so black as to look absolutely solid, but the rows of lights opposite and the reflections of several stars danced upon its surface. We stood in the centre of the human world, and the majesty of the place, which to me is incomparably greater than that which any other city can present, overwhelmed us. "Thank God for this place," Hazlewood said, "and thank God for that river. It is my refuge in time of trouble. Over and over again I have come here in hours of anxiety or depression, and the solemn, soundless language of that dark stream, which once, ages ago, rolled by under these winds and stars through wooded solitudes, has been to me the voice of God. It told me of the passing away of time, of the nothingness of man, of the vanity of human wishes, and now it tells me of the vanity of human anguish. It is death and yet it is life, and life because it is perpetual death. We speak of the river as being changeless. We think of it as of a living thing. It is not. What is a river? It is the perpetual

sweeping away towards the unknown sea of particles of water never to return. What an extraordinary lesson this teaches us! We see decay and change around us here, in that abbey, where the dust of dead monarchs lies softly under the tawdry jewels that were buried with it; in those long, low buildings by the water's edge, where the lines of human power over the globe converge and part again. But in the river under us, the soul fancies it has found an eternity, when behold, it looks and the river too is seen to be but an eternity of death. It is all wonderful, inscrutable, it passes knowledge, we cannot grasp it, the thought is overwhelming. It is so full of sorrow that it lightens sorrow. If God could be to me again as He once was, the æons to come would perhaps not be so mysterious and dark. I do not fear hell, I fear the unknown, the drifting on and on down the rivers or oceans of perpetual change. The thought of annihilation would be heaven to me. Yet these emotions, what are they after all? The vibrations of nerve fibres in the brain. How many a grand sunset has been spoilt to me by my realizing in moments of the most rapt, spiritual exaltation, that the glories

which were to me the domes and ramparts of heaven, were but the mechanical action upon the retina of rays of light refracted by the aqueous vapours in the air. Yet I cannot believe that that is all. I love to think of the soul as having size, of our dim and underlying consciousness as of a realm vast and eternal over which the years roll, bringing with them germs of further powers and glories of the coming light, till somewhere in the future the day-dawn shall break, and the shadows flee away, and the soul's wide empire of land and sea, of thought and emotion, be unveiled forever. And so the river rolls by, and we roll by, and it and we are nothing, and everything is nothing, save the relentless whirlwind which bears us onward into nothingness. Harry, I feel better for the walk or the river. I did not think I could have talked as I have to-night. We had better return, it will soon be getting light." Day had actually dawned as we turned up St. John's Wood Road. Before Hazlewood showed me to my room, he took off his shoes in the upper passage and told me to do the same. Then he led me softly into the nursery, to the cot in which his boy lay. The

little head was thrown back, and the long, dark ringlets lay in confusion over the pillow. He was a lovely child. Hazlewood bent over and kissed him, and the little fellow opened his eyes for a moment in his sleep. He was the image of his father, but with chubby baby features.

“Hush, darling,” Hazlewood said, as he rose and we crept away. “Poor little shamed motherless boy. God help us both. Good-night, my dear old friend. I have been cruel and unkind to you to drag you out and burden you with my sorrow, but, Harry, you have saved my life, you and that innocent little angel in there.”

He shook my hand warmly as we parted, and my heart was full of thankfulness that I had been of any use to him, or what was just the same, that he should think I had. His voice had softened as he said “good-night,” and his face had lost its hard, unnatural lines, and I thought his eyes were full of tears.



## CHAPTER VII

AT Beaconhurst, about a quarter of a mile from the Vicarage, from which it is separated by two fields, crossed *diagonally* by what soon became a well-trodden path, *there is* an old stone house. At one time it was *evidently part* of an ancient castle, the ruins of *which lie around* and are worked into the garden *walls and* vinerias. It stands on a bluff headland which looks far out over the sea, and is a conspicuous object to sailors and fishermen in the *channel*. The noise of the sea penetrates its *massive walls and* mullioned windows, and at night *as I have sat* in the old library and listened in the *stillness*, some curious cave-formation in the rocks below, so split and hurled back the breakers that there came round me through the walls and floors a solemn undertone, like the deep notes of an organ. This house Hazlewood took for himself and his little boy. He brought with him the faithful old nurse who

became also his housekeeper and ruled his establishment for him. Hazlewood's love for his child became the one passion of his life. So completely had it mastered him, that I believe, and so he always declared, that he left the world with its gains and applause without a pang. Of that other love, the love for his wife, which at one time had been so strong, he never spoke. I think it never returned. That there *must* have been a void in his heart, I do not doubt, but the discovery that she loved another *seem* to have blighted the love instantly, and seared into numbness the spot where it had been. People often speak wonderingly of a mother's love for her child, they look upon it as the height of devotion, but I think this is a mistake. I think that when a man loves his child, he loves it with a strength and intensity of which a woman can have no idea. I grant you that such cases are rare. They are not natural. That is just the reason why the love is so absorbing. Affections which do not arise from natural instincts, but are the result of personal affinity between individuals, are of all the most intense. In the bond between a mother and child this higher

love is frequently superadded to the natural maternal and filial instinct, and the relationship is thereby strengthened. Most of us have known instances in which a grown man's love for his mother has been so full, as to leave no room for ordinary conjugal affection.

There was something inexpressibly painful in observing Hazlewood's devotion to his child. It was too absorbing, it gave him no ease, he was perpetually anxious about him. It was the one bright spot in the whole world to him. I could not fail to note however that it had a marvellous effect upon his character. Had it been less intense, and more reasonable, more healthy, in other words, and exerted the same influence over him, it would have been only an unmixed good. It gave him that which his nature most needed—a continuous impulse in one settled direction. It supplied that motive power which he had lacked. He worked at his writing regularly now, not by fits and starts as hitherto. He was less carried away by impulse, and his moods were subordinated to and controlled by love for his child, the thought of his boy's future, and anxiety for his welfare. But, as I

have said, this love was too strong, too uncontrollable. Hazlewood was conscious of this, as he always was of his weak points.

“I love that child too much,” he said to me once. “It is very wicked of me, but I cannot help it. He seems to me to take the place of God. I never feel so near Heaven, as when I kneel down with him at night by his bedside, and he prays in his sweet innocent way for us both. In fact, I don’t seem to feel any need for God or Heaven, so so long as I have the love of him to guide and console and purify me.”

“That isn’t right, Elton, we ought to love our dear ones in God, and only in subordination to our love for Him.”

“I wish I could do that; but it is different with you, Harry. You have your wife and your home and your little children, so many outlets for your affection. I have one, only one. You think I am foolish to be so nervous and to worry about little Elton so much, don’t you?”

“I do, rather.”

“Harry,” he said, “I don’t want to shock you, but do you know what my child is to me? He is

the one anchor which holds my reason firm amid the shocks and storms of seas that would have borne down many a saner man to horrible shipwreck. I am not a sane man, my impulses and passions are too violent. With a strong love for another I am all right, but without that, after what has passed, without that"—— he hesitated as he uttered these words and his eyes had an absent look; then he added "Harry, let us change the subject."

Little Elton certainly returned his father's devotion, and as he grew into a handsome boy the likeness to his father increased almost every day. This resemblance was not merely an external one; it stamped equally his inner mental nature. He had the same quick outbursts of intellectual power, the same passionate tenderness, and also the same weakness of moral fibre as characterized his father. To know the child was to love him, and to love him was to sorrow for him, to be filled with a painful wonder.

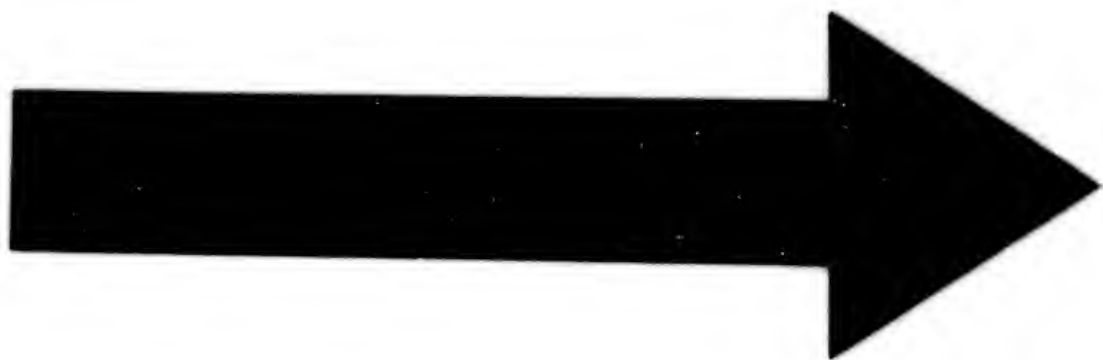
When Hazlewood has run up to town for a day, I have often taken the boy with my little ones along the sands that skirt the base of the cliffs.

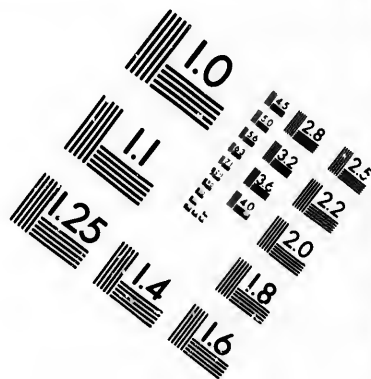
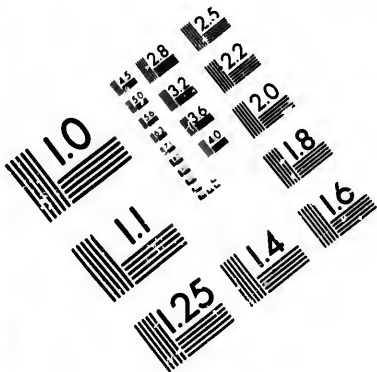
At such times, I remember, his conversation has surprised me beyond measure ; it revealed such intense thought and imagination. He was always glad to have a talk with me as a clergyman, when his father was not by to make him feel bashful, or reprove him for his inquisitiveness. He looked upon me as the people of Israel looked upon the twelve spies after their return, as one who could give minute and particular information of the promised land. He asked me one day if there were any roofs in Heaven, and if so why? because there would not be any rain or cold there. Then he wanted to know how, if it were day there all the time, we should be able to see the stars, "for I like to look at the stars," he said. He wondered if there were any horses there, and if God ever drove out with grand armies and processions, as the kings do in his story books. One day, he asked me if he had any mother. He had asked Hannah this once, he said, but she had told him not to ask questions. Of course I had to say yes, and tried to change the subject ; but he was not to be turned off in this way. If he had a mother ought not he to pray for her, as my little boys did

for their mother? The children had evidently held a council on the subject. Then he wanted to know if his mother would go to Heaven, and if he would see her there. We had a surpliced choir at Beaconhurst and in order to delight Hazlewood, I had a cassock and surplice made for little Elton, as soon as he was old enough, and he regularly, at the morning and afternoon services on Sunday, led the choir into the chancel from the vestry under the tower. The old people in the congregation would turn and look at the little fellow as he led the way up the aisle with all the dignity of a master of ceremonies, his grave spirituelle face fixed earnestly upon the altar, and his dark ringlets falling over his shoulders. He never looked to the right hand or to the left, but walked on slowly to his seat which was next to mine. Hazlewood I know used to be in ecstasies over his little white-robed angel, and he did all he could to foster the idea, which the boy had himself suggested, that he should be a clergymen when he grew up. But the inherited defect in the little fellow's nature did not escape the anxious father's eyes, and many a deep musing and sleepless night did the symptoms

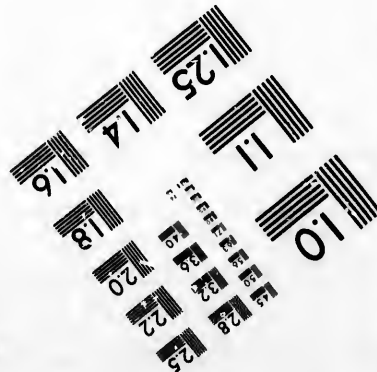
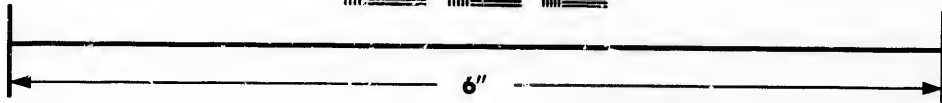
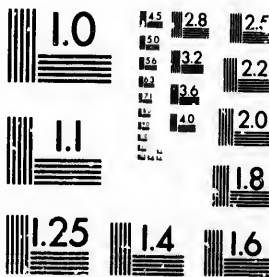
of it cause him. But, as I often told him, it is easy to correct when young the tendencies of a child's disposition. A wise and firm governor can bend and mould them to what is good and noble, and start his charge fair in the race with his face to the goal. "No, Harry," Elton would say, "not easily, not when the defect is a deficiency; only God in his future guidance through life can make up for that. You may train and cultivate a child's mind but you cannot supply to it what is not there." I do not suppose that I could fully sympathize with Hazlewood's fears as a father. My chubby little ones, dearly as I loved them, hardly cost me one anxious moment. But his nature was deeper than mine and he could therefore read more deeply into that of his boy. However, in spite of care and occasional gloomy forebodings, that period, all too short, in which Hazlewood and his boy were our close neighbours, was an exceedingly happy one. To be sure, there always loomed up in the background that terrible skeleton which we felt was never far off although we did not allude to it. Hazlewood was an exquisite rider and as he kept two horses, I often accom-







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panied him in delightful excursions to places in the neighbourhood. The motion and excitement of riding, no matter in what mood he had started out, would soon throw his spirits into the maddest joy. I have often pulled in my horse after a gallop and watched him ride madly on, and then turn and come back to me, his cheeks flushed, his eyes dancing with sheer animal glee, and his face radiant as it had been at school. He rose early and generally did his writing for the day before breakfast. He spent the rest of the morning in reading, and the afternoons he gave to his boy, while the evenings were usually passed with me either at his house or mine, where my dear wife ever made him a welcome guest. It was very rarely that we did not see him every day. Once two days passed without his coming to the Vicarage. I was very busy at the time and so did not notice his absence, but my wife, with feminine instinct, divined that something was wrong, and so at her instigation, on the second day I walked over the fields to Hazlewood Castle, as we used to playfully call my friend's house.

It was about five o'clock of an afternoon in the

early part of September. The air was clear and cool. I heard the children's voices, the clink of the blacksmith's hammer, the lowing of cattle, and other sounds from the little village which lay in a hollow beyond the church and was now obscured from view save for a few roofs and chimneys with their wreaths of blue curling smoke. Hazlewood, I found, was not at home, but Mrs. Hannah told me she thought that he was out on "the point." The point was at the edge of the bluff on which the castle stood. It was a slight plateau of grass and ferns, which overhung the cliff, and was reached by a zigzag path about twenty feet in descent. In olden times it had evidently been used as a place of signalling, and had given the name of Beaconhurst to the village. Hazlewood was lying on the grass, his head resting on his hand, and his eyes fixed on the glorious purple and gold mists that hid the distant shores of France. He did not hear me come, and started when he saw me. His eyes were sad and his features looked haggard.

"Ah," he said, as I came, "who told you?"

"Told me what? I don't know anything. I

only came to see why you had not been over to our house for two whole days ; my wife feared you might be ill."

"It was very good of her to think of me. No, it was not that—something else."

He paused, and I sat on the grass beside him and waited, without speaking, looking at the sea which lay at our feet. Presently he said, "Harry, look out over there." He pointed with his hand to the purple mists before us, which were dulling into gray, while the streaks of water beneath them were a translucent and fairy green. "Over there, beyond those mists, miles away, there is a grave ; some one I was once very proud of and loved better than anything else in the whole world, lies in it. She died last week in childbirth. I only heard yesterday. Don't ask me any more. She is dead to me now, forever, forever."

He turned over and hid his face down under the long tufts of grass. I felt that even my presence was an intrusion, so I crept noiselessly away, and my wife and I kept the secret to ourselves. When we next saw Hazlewood, the traces of a shadow were still over him, but he appeared to be

just the same as before; and soon the incident passed from our ordinary thoughts.

But the deepest lines which the chisel of God graved upon his heart and soul, and which fixed the permanent expression of that soul's life, were not made *tanta* but *after*. It was the February after, and a wild, dark February it was. Never have I experienced such winds and storms or heard the sea so boisterous. Many sad hearts there were along the coast, for almost every mail brought its tidings of shipwreck and disaster. There was much sickness too in the parish, for the Winter had been a warm and unhealthy one, and all contagious diseases showed a tendency to become epidemic. A kind of low fever had broken out in the place, and my children had been down with it, but thanks to my dear wife's motherly watchfulness, the little ones had all recovered.

The fifteenth of February was little Elton's seventh birthday. He had been an exception to the general run of the children in the parish, and had escaped all illness during the Winter. His father took every possible care of him, and he had not been allowed to come near our house for over

a month, nor did our children go to see him. But his birthday, his father told me, would be nothing to him unless I went up and had dinner at the castle, in place of the party which was usually given to celebrate the event.

The clouds were dark and lowering, and the evening strangely still, as I started off to the six o'clock dinner. Hazlewood had not yet returned from riding, but on my entering the hall, little Elton looked down at me from the curving staircase, and putting his face through a hole in the bannisters, called out :

“Is that you, Uncle Harry? I'm so glad you have come. Daddy has given me a pony, a real, live pony, that I am to learn to ride. Come out to the stable and see him.”

I thought I had never seen so sweet a boyish face, save perhaps one, and that long ago at school. His cheeks were flushed with the deepest rose, and his eyes were unusually large and brilliant. He was dressed in a new tight-fitting velvet suit, with wide lace collar, and with his dark wavy hair looked like a sweet little boy courtier from the canvass of Vandyke. I went to the stable with



him and saw the new Shetland. It was a perfect beauty, and I promised to let him often accompany us when his father and I went out together. The dinner was little Elton's, so the evening was given up to his amusement, and we two old boys romped with him afterwards, and even condescended to take off our coats and wrestle together for his gratification. I was also, as a great treat for him, taken up-stairs to the little room adjoining his father's, and acted as a sort of superintending chamberlain as he undressed and said his prayers and got into bed. Hazlewood and I then went down to the library, and while we smoked, talked over old times and the days when we were boys, which now appeared to us so like a dream. The next morning Hazlewood was not at church, and in the afternoon one of the servants from the Castle told me that Master Elton was very ill. She said he had been "taken bad" in the night. I did not think it was very serious and jokingly sent him word that he had eaten too much birthday cake, and that I should have to go up to him with my medicine chest. About half-past one o'clock, at night, however, I was roused by a loud knocking

at the door, the bell had been broken by a deaf, old parishioner in the afternoon. I went down and to my surprise found the visitor was old Dr. Jackson, the village doctor.

"I am sorry to disturb you," he said "but I have very serious news for you; poor Hazlewood's little boy has diphtheria."

"Diphtheria?"

"Yes, a very bad case, in fact all but a hopeless case. I don't think he can possibly get over it. The disease has developed so rapidly and taken such hold of his constitution. I wish you would go up to his father. He seems stunned and cannot realize the seriousness of the case."

Not many minutes passed ere I was standing in the wind and rain before Hazlewood's door. The house was brilliantly lit up and when I entered I found that the servants were evidently in terrible consternation. Upstairs, in the little room, Hazlewood was sitting by the bed holding his child's burning hand. The boy was asleep, and lay with his head far back on the pillow, his hair all tossed, and one deep fiery spot, about the size of a crown, on each cheek. His throat was terribly swollen,

and I had heard the sound of his breathing as I ascended the stairs. His face wore a troubled, pained look, and the lids of his large dark eyes were slightly open, and showed the whites underneath. Elton turned towards me as I came in, but his face was a riddle to me. He did not look like himself. He looked hard and defiant, but not worn or anxious.

“Well, Harry, did the doctor tell you to come? He is a perfect old woman; the child is better, he sleeps. You should have seen how bad he was this afternoon; but now the crisis is past, I know it is. Do you suppose that I have watched Elton, so carefully all these years and not known how illness affects him? He goes down very rapidly, and then turns a corner and comes up again, just as rapidly. I am never anxious about him, when he has these attacks, because I have watched him too narrowly, and I know what to expect. A stranger might be, who did not know him.”

All this was whispered out to me in broken sentences, his head turning between each towards the pained little face on the pillow. “If it were some

regular disease, the course of which I did not understand, I should be more disturbed."

"Did not the doctor tell you what it was?" I asked.

"No, he said he could not say to-night, he would be able to tell better in the morning."

There was a pause; the little fellow moaned in his sleep.

Then Elton turned to me and fixing his eyes upon my face, said:

"Did he tell *you* what it was?"

Generally speaking, I tell the truth, but then the devil of fear got the better of me and I could not utter the truth, or even half the truth. I cleared my throat a little, and told a deliberate falsehood.

"No," I said.

"That's a lie, Harry," said Hazlewood, still watching me narrowly; "Thank you for it, but it's a lie. He did tell you. He told you that it was diphtheria, and that he would not get over it; I read it in your face. Don't deny it. I have known the dreadful truth all day but could not face it."

"O, Elton, my dear old fellow, put your trust in God."

"I do, Harry, I have no one else but you and God now."

"Put God's name first, Elton."

He pressed his lips tightly and turned his pale face towards the bed. I tried to say something to comfort him, but I could not, my voice choked me, my head throbbed and I—I, God's minister, struck with sheer madness of sorrow at his awful calmness, stole into the next room and sobbed like a child.

All that night, at brief intervals, the little fellow would wake and cry out for his father, whom in his delirium he fancied was far away. His ravings were all about the angels and the church and Heaven. And once, about four o'clock, he awoke from a longer sleep than usual and called three times for his mother, "Mamma, Mamma, Mamma, oh, where have they put my Mamma?"

Hazlewood bent over him.

"Here is Daddie, darling, you are all right. Do you want anything?"

"I want to see my Mamma."

Then he fell to rambling about other things, more or less incoherently, but the incident revealed

the sorrow and questionings which had lain hidden all this time in the child's heart. I was glad that, as I had gone to a table to wet a cloth with cologne and water, my back was turned to Hazlewood when it happened. The only sign Elton gave that he felt this new wound was a deep sigh like a sob, "O, God help me," so low that I could not be said to have heard it, I *overheard* it. On the next day the boy rallied slightly, but in the afternoon grew worse again. A London physician had been sent for and had confirmed our worst fears. Hazlewood now knew that the case was hopeless, but he bore up without a tear, never leaving the child's side and suffering no one to touch him but himself. All that night and the next the fever raged and the disease pursued its dreadful course, till on the fourth day, early in the morning, I was sent for to go to the castle and specially requested to bring the Communion vessels with me. On entering the child's room, I found him choking, but he was perfectly sensible, and I could distinctly understand his whispers, which came slowly and in gasps.

"Uncle Harry, I want the Bread, the Bread of

Heaven. I am going there, I am very weak, I cannot take any food. Give me the Communion."

"You could not swallow it, dear, I am afraid. It would not be right when you can't swallow. Jesus is the Bread of Heaven and He will feed you Himself when you go to Him."

"Uncle," then came a gasp, "don't they always have it, they, dying people, I mean, don't they always have it?"

"No, dear, not when they can't swallow."

Then a bright thought flashed upon me.

"But I will tell you what I will do. Your father and I will take it for you. I will put on my surplice and we shall have the service just as we do in church."

"Daddie," he gasped, looking for his father, and his eyes closed from sheer exhaustion, then they opened and he said, "Daudie, lay my surplice over me too."

His father went to a closet and fetched it, and spread it out over him, hiding all but the swollen, suffering face, on which death had already cast his shadow. Then in the grey of the morning we had Communion, the sweetest and solemnest I ever re-

member. Hazlewood knelt by the bedside holding the child's hand still. The little fellow had shut his eyes and his breathing was painful to listen to, but he seemed to be full of a strange and heavenly peace, and to be wholly conscious of what was going on. We had each communicated and I had just begun the "Gloria in Excelsis," "Glory to God in 'ne highest and on earth peace, good will towards men," when the little fellow's face suddenly changed, a convulsive tremour shook his frame, he choked slightly, then curled himself back, and his breathing stopped. In an instant Elton had jumped up, and before I could divine his intention, he had put his mouth to the child's mouth and tried to force air into the lungs and break the membrane which filled the throat. But it was of no avail; the Spirit had gone. The Heavenly Host who had but now filled the room in adoration of the Divine Presence, had born it back with them to the bosom of the God who gave it.

The servants, all but old Mrs. Hannah, who was prostrate with grief, had left the house, so Elton and I, robing the sweet child's form in the



snowy surplice, fittest emblem of its innocence, with our own hands, laid it in the rough deal coffin, which was all that the village could supply at so short a notice. The undertaker would not come near the house, so, as it would have been impossible to have kept the body longer, the doctor and I bore out the little coffin to the churchyard at sunset on that very afternoon. Hazlewood, pallid and broken down, and evidently sickening for the disease, wrapped in a long cloak, his face muffled in a wide black scarf, followed slowly, as chief and only mourner.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**T**HROUGH long nights and days my wife and I and good old Mrs. Hannah watched in turn at the bedside of my friend. The delirium which at first had been very severe, gradually abated and was succeeded by terrible and tedious prostration. Gradually, however, strength returned to the wasted form. But little by little, as Hazlewood regained a measure of his former health, it became apparent that a change had passed over him. During the weeks of convalescence, while he lay back in his bed with his face turned to the grand view of sea and sky which his window afforded, his spirit seemed to be passing through a transformation as extraordinary as it was radical. He spoke little, scarcely ever, unless addressed by others. He was wonderfully patient and gentle. He did not appear to be lonely, when left by himself, and though he seldom joined in it, he never seemed to be disturbed or annoyed by the conver-

sation of his attendants. He never referred to the past, and sometimes my wife and I have wondered if it were at all clear to him. That it was, we discovered later. When he was well enough to go out, I used to take him for short walks up and down in front of the castle. He tottered like an old man and felt so slight as he leant upon my arm. One dreaded excursion passed off quite otherwise than I had expected, I mean the first visit to his boy's grave. We went there one afternoon in the end of May. The churchyard was looking its best, the birds were full of music, and the scent of the fresh leaves and flowers was delightful. Little Elton's grave had been lovingly tended by my wife, and was prettily arranged with forget-me-nots and heartsease down its centre in the form of three Maltese crosses. Elton was evidently pleased to find it in this condition. He knelt beside it and I turned away, so as not to hear the sobs that shook his being. After a short time he rose slowly and came and took my arm, and we strolled up and down the wide gravel path in front of the Church.

He was quite calm then.

“What an inscrutable mystery it all is!” he said. “What is life? What is death? Why cannot that poor child under there answer, as he once did, to my call? Why cannot his little eyes open and look up into mine and his arms be thrown round my neck? There the little body lies out in the cold and damp earth, the body that I guarded so carefully and loved so distractedly. I wonder if the ancients loved their families as we love ours. I think not. I think Christianity has intensified, as it has purified our domestic affections. The cultivation of the emotional side of man’s nature in religion has developed its sensibility and its need of love. Some people may think this is not to be commended. They deplore the deterioration of the physical constitution of man, which, to a large extent the development of his nervous organization implies. Over-sensitiveness certainly is to be deplored, as being incompatible with a condition of health, but we must remember that science is more and more making life and health possible to mental organizations so fine and sensitive, that it would have been impossible for them to have endured existence under the rough

conditions of old. Evolution in man, having brought his body to a certain degree of perfection, now acts along the line of mental and emotional progress. Man is daily becoming more man, more spiritual. It is the work of God, and the revelation of God's Son has helped it on. Some think that evolution contradicts the doctrine of design in nature ; I cannot see it. I would illustrate the gradual accomplishment of God's purposes in nature by the course of a stream down the face of a hill. The water does not flow directly to its goal in the valley below, as it would were it poured down through the air. No, it runs here and there into little crevices in the earth, skirting each obstruction, filling tiny lakes, which are no sooner filled than abandoned, until in time the end of its course is attained, and the stream is finally absorbed into the grand river at the base. Through it all, however, even when the stream went this way and that, the impelling force was that of gravitation which acted downwards in a straight line. So, from the beginning of time, there has been a constant flowing on of created life through nature towards some goal which is the fulfillment of God's

purpose. There have been obstacles in its course which hindered its direct advance ; there have been wide, deep lakes, in which no advance has been apparent for long periods ; there have been smooth and steep declines where progress was made with a bound, but in whatever way the evolution proceeded, the impelling force was the will of God acting in a straight line through nature. What hope this gives us for ourselves, for the whole race ! How it keeps us in time with the forward march of thought ! And when we have this hope, we can work quietly and contentedly and suffer patiently under the dispensations of God. Yes, we are not a worn-out race, battering vainly with stunted strength against the bars which inexorable law has set round man's domain, but a race still in childhood, still pressing on to the unknown and the ideal, to the fulfillment of our hopes, the attainment of our highest aspirations.

“ Yes, on we press, forever on  
Through death to other deaths and life,  
To brighter lights when these are gone  
To broader thought, more glorious strife.

To vistas opening out of these,  
To wonders shining from afar,  
Above the surging of the seas,  
Above the course of sun and star.

To higher powers of will and deed,  
All bounds, all limits left behind,  
To truths undreamt in any creed,  
To deeper love more Godlike mind.

Great God, we move into the vast,  
All questions vain—the shadows come,  
We hear no answer from the past,  
The years before us all are dumb.

We trust thy purpose and thy will,  
We see afar the shining goal,  
Forgive us, if there linger still  
Some human fear within the soul.

Forgive us, if with thoughts too wild  
And eyes too dim to pierce the gloom.  
We shudder like a frightened child  
That enters at a darkened room.

Forgive us, if when dies away,  
All human sound upon our ears,  
We hear not in the swift decay  
Thy loving voice to calm our fears.

But lo, the dawn of fuller days.  
Horizon glories fringe the sky,  
Our feet would climb the shining ways  
To meet man's widest destiny."

“Yes, that is life, and that is death—progress, progress. It is hard to see it now, the gloom is very deep, but we shall see more clearly some day. In that white morning when, side by side you and I, and hand in hand that sweet child and I, stand among the risen dead, in the world that is to be, no clouds will obscure our perfect vision. Harry,” he said, suddenly breaking off, “I have a great favour to ask of you.”

“Well, what is it? you know it will be granted as soon as you make it, if it is in my power to do so.”

“I know that, but I hesitate to make it.”

“Why should you? will it be very hard to grant?”

“I don’t know, there may be a struggle in your mind between your sense of right and your desire to do me a favour. Promise me one thing first.”

“What is that?”

“That if you don’t think it is wise or right, or even convenient to do what I ask, you will not try to do it.”

“All right, I can easily promise that.”

“Then I—no, I cannot ask it, I will write you



a letter in explanation. If you don't like my proposition, just put my letter in the fire and say no more about it."

I left Hazlewood at his house, and returned to do some parish work in the village. The next morning at church, I found a letter for me in my friend's handwriting on the vestry table. After service, shutting the doors in the quaint old room, that I might be undisturbed, I broke the seal and read it. It ran as follows :

*" My dear old fellow.*

I could not tell you what was in my mind this afternoon for two reasons. First, because I experience great difficulty in opening up to another the inner workings of the soul, and I have an objection on principle to doing so ; and secondly, because my broaching the matter in conversation would have made your conscientious refusal of my request more trying to you. I am going to put my whole case before you now quite fully, and I shall accept your decision as final. Perhaps you may have noticed and yet very likely you may not, that a change has passed over me. Something has made me a different man. It is very hard for me to write this, it sounds so methodistical and presumptuous, but you will understand my motive. That which has made me different, is the realizing, as I have never realized before, the Incarnation of God the Son—' *The Word was made Flesh.*' During those terrible hours of pain and mental anguish, into which God in his mercy plunged me, the truth flashed upon me with start-

ling force. I believe that but for it I should have lost my reason. Night after night, when sleep would not come, and I have turned and turned and found no bodily ease, those wonderful words have given me comfort. When all was dark and my weak mind borne hither and thither on currents of thought which set on all sides towards the encompassing sea of despair, the only safety my reason found, was to cling to the cradle of Jesus, and to kneel in imagination between St. Mary and St. Joseph as they looked down upon the face of the Holy Child. In that cradle there was man, there was human love, human emotion, and there was God. It was all a fact, it was a rock on which to anchor the soul amid the storm. I could face death fearlessly from such a vantage ground. Then as I grew stronger the personal love of Jesus filled me with a restful joy, a joy and peace it had never been mine to know. I see now how God has led me in the past, from the world and self up to the higher love of my child, which concentrated all my thoughts and inconstant impulses into one strong, settled passion; and now I can see how, by bereavement, he has lifted my heart to a love higher and holier still—the love of Himself, who cannot pass away, but is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Divine love does not preclude earthly love, when pure and good, it intensifies it, it takes away the sting which must be in it to those who look for no life beyond death. How wonderfully true St. Augustine's words are, 'The soul of man can find no true rest till it rests in God.' I have found that rest now, and by God's grace and transforming power I mean to try and keep it. Please forgive me again for writing so egotistically. Now let me make my request. It is that you should write for me to the Bishop and influence him to ordain me, and then let me live here and work with you as your curate. At one time, I had thought seriously of taking orders, but I was not

fit then. God has prepared me for it since. Now, I think, I could give my heart unreservedly to Him, and spend the closing years of my life cheerfully in his service. If only I had been able to overcome that fatal weakness and irresolution in my character, which first led me into sin, and then led to the rejection of the divine call, and if I had been able, like you, to serve God from the first, how different my life would have been. But there is no use in vain regrets. I have suffered, and shall still suffer, for the past. If I work with you, you will find me obedient and loyal, for as you must know, I owe you more than I can express in words. I leave the matter entirely in your hands, and if you approve, do you set it all before the Bishop. You must weigh carefully the reasons for and against my proposition, but if you can take it up, it will be the beginning of a new life to me.

Ever your affectionate friend,

ELTON HAZLEWOOD.

I read this letter twice and thanked God for the marvellous workings of His providence. Then with heart overjoyed, I almost ran through the spring fields up to the castle, bearing my unwritten answer in the very gladness of my face.

## CHAPTER IX.

**T**HE five years of his diaconate which Hazlewood spent with me as curate, were without exception the happiest of my life. A fellowship of sentiment and aim, such as nothing but union of religious thought and work can give, drew our hearts together in yet stronger bonds of love. The people of the parish almost worshipped him. No trouble was too great for him. In sickness and in health he was their friend and guide, but it was in sorrow that he was most helpful. His tender gentleness made him at once the accepted counsellor of all in distress. His quick sympathy consoled and soothed in cases when no alleviation could be offered. The very grasp of his hand assured you of his willingness to share your burden with you. After all he had gone through in life, one might have expected that he would have been broken down, that his ministry would have been a sorrowful crucifixion of self, but it was not so.

The most marvellous feature of the change he had undergone was that it had conferred upon him mental health. There was nothing morbid or melodramatic about it. He was manly, frank and cheerful, even boyish. He spoke and thought much less of his inner feelings than he had been wont to do. He even referred calmly to his sorrow, although every day he made a pilgrimage to his boy's grave. The world seemed to have a new interest for him. All his former intellectual powers were there, but they were brought into a healthy proportion and subordination to the sense of duty to God and the personal love of Jesus, which had become the main spring of his life. Perhaps, if in anything he was liable to be misunderstood it was in the magazine articles which he wrote from time to time, and in his sermons. Old-fashioned people, whose minds moved in a rut, and who loved the rut, were sometimes startled by the new and strange way he had of putting things. The fact was, Hazlewood was a genius, and when he had accepted a truth he gave it back, coloured with his wonderful personality. Truth in his mind was analyzed and reasoned out into all its ways and by-

ways. He had absolutely no fear of possible consequences in his statement of what he conceived to be truth. He was frankness itself, and to this was owing his singular power in dealing with those who knew and trusted him. In noting these characteristics, it must be remembered that Hazlewood came to his work with a mature mind, and with a deep knowledge of the world and men. But it is not my purpose to give a detailed account of his life, only to indicate its main features, and describe more minutely the various turning points in his history and mental development. As part of his spiritual experience, and not without its future bearing upon this story, I may here record a remarkable dream which Hazlewood had towards the close of his residence at Beaconsfield. On the Sunday evening before he left for his ordination to the priesthood at Winchester, it being a brilliant moonlight night, we strolled together down to the shore. The great waves rolled slowly in without ruffling the surface of the ocean and the black cliffs stood up behind us like giants who bid defiance to the encroaching deep. There was no other sound to be heard but the splash of the rollers, as they broke

along the shore. We stood silent listening to that wonderful sea-language. I was reminded of those lines of Tennyson,

“And rolling far along the rocky shore  
The voice of days of old and days to be,”

and quoted them.

“How glorious those verses are,” said Hazlewood, “and what a scene they call up in the mind. All the splendour and subtle mystery of a night like this are stored up in them. What the soul feels to-night is vastness, the vastness of the world, the vastness of eternity. The sea always appears to me to be the emotional part of physical nature, or the world’s soul. It is always the same; but the same because always changing. The winds like passions sweep over it and lash it into fury; the sun looks down upon it and it is still. Its sympathetic bosom reflects the colours of the sky and the changes in the clouds and atmosphere. As in man, memory bears on to the limits of age softened echoes of the soul’s past pains and struggles, so the billows which re-echo the shock and anguish of tempests in mid ocean, roll off in subdued

grandeur towards the distant coast. And in nights like these, surely the sea sleeps and dreams. Down in its mysterious mile depths of water the great impulses and tides are like the underlying currents of thought in the soul which rest not day nor night."

We had turned as he was talking and walked on to the cave in the cliff under the point on which his house stood. We sat down for a while on the rocks. Then Hazlewood said :

"The other night I had such a curious dream. I don't often remember my dreams, but this one made a great impression upon me. I dreamt that I was out riding by myself at night on that road to Insworth which you and I have so often travelled together. I was very lonely and very sad as I rode. Then I felt that some one was riding after me and trying to overtake me, and after a time I became conscious that it was she, my poor lost wife. She seemed to be crying out to me and begging me to turn and wait for her, but I would not. Then I heard her say distinctly, 'We shall meet there,' but I did not look round or ask her where. Suddenly, as I rode, never slack-



ing my speed, I came to a large pond by the way-side, and I reined in my horse and dismounted, and looked into the water among the rushes, and there I found it—the body of my dead child. As I lifted him out all cold and wet, *she* came up, and I was angry with her no longer, and she and I kissed each other, and we kissed the child, and the child revived and stood between us. Then long streamers of a wonderful Aurora rolled out over the heavens, like the unfurling of the flag of victory, and it grew as light as day. We looked up over the water, and behold, it was a sea of glass, and I turned to my wife, from whose face all sorrow, all earthliness were passed away, and bending down to her I said, ‘For ever!’ ”

It was partly the scene, and partly the music of Hazlewood’s voice, and the soft, absent way in which he related the dream, which thrilled me so strangely. I sat there on the rocks looking at his profile, as he gazed out to sea, entranced by that curious spiritual charm which he at all times exercised over me. He carried me with him into the mysterious dreamland of his vision. I saw it all, the long, dim road, the pond, the dead child, and

the reunion by the shining water. I felt it was prophetic, even while I dared not hope so, dared not pray so. When I bid him farewell at the Vicarage gate, light, ruffled clouds had spread over the moon, and its rays were dim, and I could not see his features clearly. The outline was vague, he seemed to be already merging into the shadows. Had I known then that this was to be our last meeting on this side of eternity, and that never again should I see that wonderful face, as it had been through boyhood, youth, and in the prime of manhood, till I shall see it glorified in the Kingdom of God, how I should have gazed lovingly through the darkness, till I had traced the outline of each remembered feature.

## CHAPTER X.

IT had been arranged that I should go down to Winchester for Elton's ordination. I was to stay at the Abbey of St. Cross, about a mile or so out of the city, with old Dr. Buxton, a college friend of my father's. Owing to a case of serious illness in the parish, I was unable to leave home till Saturday afternoon, and when I arrived at Winchester, it was raining in torrents. Dr. Buxton had sent his carriage for me, so I drove comfortably to the Abbey. I had expected that Elton would have come to see me in the evening, as I had asked him to do, but there were so many possible reasons why he should not, that, beyond a feeling of disappointment at not being able to wish him Godspeed before his ordination, his absence cost me no thought. The night was dark and wet, he would probably have some business to transact, he would be tired after the examinations and would want to rest before the solemn ordeal of the next

day, one or more of these reasons occurred to my mind as sufficient excuse for his non-appearance.

Sunday was a glorious day. I was awakened shortly after sunrise by the noise of birds in a tree near my window. A soft sweet wind came in through the open casement, and from where I lay in bed, I could catch a glimpse of the distant river through the meadows, and a hill beyond. The part of the Master's Lodge in which my room was situated was covered with ivy, and some straggling leaves, as the sun shone through them, made a bright green bordure to one side of my window. The walls and ceiling of the room were panelled in black oak, and evidently hundreds of years had passed since human hands carved those quaint figures over the fireplace. I lay still for a time, thinking about the manifold changes in man and life which these walls had seen. In the house there was absolute silence, but the notes of birds filled my room with melody. The stillness of the chamber, however, the scent of the breeze, the singing of the birds, and the old historical associations of the place, affected me only as a sweet dream, till of a sudden, my eye caught

the reflexion of the sun from a small flaw in one of the lozenged window panes. The thing shone like a dewdrop or diamond. It was very small, but sent to me a tiny brilliant ray. Straightway, as though I had heard a note of music, the combined effect of sight and sound, which had soothed me but a moment before in a pleasing reverie, was intensified, and in a thrilling trance my mind was carried back to my dear old boyhood's home. Sometimes the veriest trifle will strike in this way a nerve of emotional association and electrify at once our whole being. It may have been that the brilliant speck in the glass reminded me of the shining of the sun on the pond at home, on the Sunday morning on which Hazlewood and my father had the conversation I have narrated. Perhaps it brought back memories of the medley of colours in the little old Norman window by the Knight's tomb. The point of light carried me back in a world of dreams to Hazlewood and his visit to us. How it was, I do not know, but so real was this spiritual resurrection of the past, that as I gazed upon the scene with closed eyes, I could have averred that it was before me. I heard the voices

of those long dead, and had I been a painter, I could have depicted their faces and, what is more difficult to do from memory, the clothes they wore of bygone fashion. The centre of the dream was of course Hazlewood. I saw him as he had been, the brilliant, handsome youth with the world spread dazzlingly before him. I went fishing with him in the brook which ran through the Mallocks' Park. I drove him in our little pony cart through the summer lanes. I could hear him speak, I could hear the ring of his laugh. Then, as I lay awake in this entrancing exaltation of feeling, a church bell in the distance began to toll, and reminded me of the day and the solemn consecration of my friend. His true life was only about to begin in all its fullness. The past with its failures, its sorrows, its worldly triumphs, had been put away, and the soldier strong, well-knit and fully equipped was to enter the battle as the champion of God. I did not sleep again, but was out in the garden long before the other members of the family were stirring.

Dr. Buxton accompanied me to the Cathedral and procured me a seat in the Choir. The place

was full of people, and the organ played softly as we waited for the clergy to enter. Presently we heard an "Amen" sung by the choir in one of the transepts, and we rose as the choristers entered from the nave. They took their places two by two in the old stalls, and my eyes anxiously scanned the long line of faces to see where Hazlewood was. But I looked in vain, he was not there. The service proceeded; I thought that I must have been mistaken; but no, the candidates sat in a place by themselves, and I could make out their features distinctly. Elton was not among them. What could have happened to him? During the sermon, I could hardly sit still. Somehow or other, I had a sense that the end had come, I did not attempt to say what end, but I felt that the crisis of his life had been passed. He was to have no part here. The paths which to-day were opened up to the feet of those young men, paths of duty and love and self-sacrifice, were closed to him. The future I had imagined for him was never to be realized. But what was that future now to be? Why had he not come? Was he ill? Had his heart failed him at the last?

If this ordination had been held ten years ago, such an occurrence would have been possible and even probable. But no, Elton now, the strong earnest man, purified and tempered by God's fiery trials, was not one to turn back at the last. Once the thought crossed my mind, that perhaps in some way his old sin had found him out, and a threat of exposure been made through revenge. At any rate, why had he not called on me, or written, or sent word that he was not coming? The suspense was terrible, and yet through it all, as I have said, I had a sort of consciousness that the end had come. O, Elton, noble and good and true, lonely and so battered, but not broken, by life's storms, I felt that the fight had been won, that thou hadst received thy crown!

As the white-robed candidates knelt before the Bishop, and a boy's voice, clear as an angel's, began the "Veni Creator" to Attwood's lovely setting, I made it rather a prayer for myself than for my absent friend. After the service I went to the hotel at which Hazlewood had stayed, and my anxiety was still further increased on learning that he had not been seen since Thursday. He had



received a letter early on the morning of that day by the post and had gone out shortly afterwards. He told no one where he was going, but he had never returned. As he had left his desk and portmanteau in his room, the hotel people had expected him daily. Later on in the afternoon, I saw the Bishop's chaplain and secretary, but they were as much at a loss to understand the sudden disappearance as I was. Acting on their advice, I put the matter into the hands of the police, and telegraphed to his lawyer in town. Every conceivable device was then resorted to by which we might obtain information. We advertised, we offered rewards, we employed detectives, but in vain. Day after day passed away and no tidings came.

At the end of a week I returned home, and there the silence and suspense were harder to bear, where every scene recalled so vividly the missing one. At first the sympathy of the people was aroused, they feared foul play. Soon however, a reaction of feeling set in, under the influence of the parish gossips, and reports damaging to Elton's character were circulated freely.

The story was that a threatened revelation of some old crime in the past had caused his flight. Most of the people, I was told, came to think by and by that the parish was well rid of the handsome and clever curate, who had already got the Vicar too much under his finger and thumb. So malevolent and ungrateful is the world that I do not think there were ten individuals in the place who really mourned, or sympathized with, or prayed for their late friend, whose self-sacrifice and devotion had but yesterday been proverbial. Very little was said to me on the subject, but I could pretty clearly discern the public sentiment. The knowledge of it stung me to the quick, and made me hate the place and my fellowmen, and only the thought of our Saviour wearing so patiently the thorn-crown of the world's ingratitude, reconciled me to continue my work in the parish.

Weeks and months and years went by and still we heard no word of my friend, and to the mystery which shrouded his disappearance was added the stain of the world's reproach. Bitterly did the thought of this add to my bereavement, yet I never doubted him, never mistrusted him, and

often, when some incident in my work, some old recollection, some anniversary, has forced on me a double portion of my sorrow, I have gone and stood out in the churchyard beside his boy's grave and prayed to the God of justice and love to right the wrong, and clear up the mystery before the eyes of the cruel world. But the answer came not, and year after year the stain rested upon the memory of one of the noblest and most generous of those hearts, who from time to time come into being under a fellowship with the unrecognition and rejection of their Master, of whom it is said that "He came into the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

## CHAPTER XI.

**D**OWN on a wild stretch of the Cornish coast, about a mile from the little village of St. Maddo, there is a long low promontory which juts out from the cliffs into the ocean, as though the shore in its slumber had lain one unconquerable arm upon the deep. On the end of this promontory stands up boldly a curious rock, so flat and square and clear-cut that it looks like a giant altar on which past races were wont to sacrifice to the Gods of land and sea. The storms of ages have beaten against its sides and thundered at its iron base in vain. It is scarred, it is water-stained. It has heard lightnings split the rocks around, it has felt the earthquakes of centuries, but it stands unshaken still, as though carved for some special purpose by the hand of God. The tides as they ebb and flow, sweep round it with tremendous force, and the long Atlantic breakers dash madly against it and pile high their foam in air. And

on this natural altar when years had passed, and dear old Elton's name had become a bygone tale, when a cloud had darkened his memory before the world, in a marvellous way, my prayer was answered and the mystery cleared.

My wife and I had gone for a short holiday into Cornwall, and while there, finding ourselves in the neighborhood of St. Maddo, and recalling its connexion with Hazlewood, who, as the reader will remember, had gone there with Byrne in the same summer in which he had visited us in Essex, we determined to make it for a time our abode. Something seemed to draw me thither, it may have been a presentiment, it may have been merely that my love for Hazlewood gave everything connected with him a peculiar interest to me. The place, though easy of access, is unfrequented by tourists, and is therefore specially charming to those who love nature and the simple rural life of our villages. My favourite walk every afternoon was to the rock I have described. It had a weird charm for me. Hour after hour I have stood with my face to the west at sunset, and gazed at the long

golden pathway, which stretched far out over the infinite sea as though it were the road to Heaven. Again and again, as I have looked at the wide expanse and heard the waves breaking under me, I have thought of Hazlewood and prayed for light. Little did I dream then that the place whereon I stood was holy ground, consecrated as the last spot on earth on which his feet had rested. It may be that in some occult way, it was his spiritual presence which pervaded the place and made it so wonderful to me. No doubt I was in the hands of God, and he had directed me to the answering of my prayer. There is nothing strange in the coincidences of life, but at every moment we are upheld and guided by the Divine Hand. The events of life are linked together in a golden chain and each instant is made to be the true preparation for the next. We cannot be rid of mysteries, but to those who believe, all mysteries are harmonized and solved by the ultimate mystery of God.

Late on the last afternoon of our stay at St. Maddo, I went out by myself along the shore to bid farewell to the rock and the view from it with which I had grown so familiar. The sun was

almost on the horizon, not a breath was stirring, and the waves broke along the coast in tremulous lines of white, softly as a child smiles in sleep. The great strength of the deep and the formless passions of its under-currents were hushed and stilled by the calm loveliness of the evening. Nature was full of the repose which flows from the heart of God, in whom alone infinite power coexists with infinite will. Never is power grander than when it is manifested in restraint. The subdued stillness of the air and ocean was inexpressibly wonderful, and as the sun sank lower and touched the far, faint wall of the western waves, irradiated by the golden glories of the sky, the whole scene was an unspoken parable. It was the vision of a strong and noble soul calmed, softened, and sublimed by the light of Heaven. Without speaking, without even formulating one's ideas, to behold such a scene was a sacrament, to breathe in it was to pray. Lying out at full length on the rocks, I lingered on till the pure gold of the western horizon had deepened into crimson, and the crimson had faded into pale yellow. Then I rose and turned to go, sorrowing to leave the place as though I was de-

scending from the mount of the transfiguration. It was with a start, that I discovered I had not been alone upon the rock. At a short distance, gazing at me intently and curiously, stood a man. He was deeply bent, and he leaned feebly upon his stick. His hat was pushed back from his forehead and his features bare. The face was blanched and haggard, and looked as though prematurely aged by acute suffering or former dissipation. His gaze was fixed earnestly upon me, and as I stood regarding him, a dim sense of recognition came over me. I had seen that face before. It was mixed up with old associations in my soul. The thought of it was bound up mysteriously with the love of someone in the past, and the knowledge of a great wrong. Then the consciousness of recognition deepened, my heart suddenly stopped beating, my breath came short and quick, the whole scene, all save the bowed figure before me, melted instantly away, and recoiling, I said,

“Byrne!”

“Yes,” he said slowly, in a deep hollow voice, “We have met at last, and for the last time. I



heard at the village you were here and I said I will go and meet him there, and now he shall know the truth. It has been kept too long but it shall be kept no longer. There is no need to do so, for the lips that now speak to you will soon be silent forever, and I shall be beyond the power of human blame and human vengeance. Let my last act be one of justice to the dead."

He spoke slowly and with a solemn precision, as though the utterance of every word gave him a stab of pain. The voice was as much the shadow of a human voice as the man was the shadow of a man. Voice and man on that lone rock, with the dark cliffs in the background, filled me with an undefinable dread, and I stood speechless, as though awed by some ghostly apparition. Never, for a moment, did he change his position nor withdraw his gaze from mine, but continued in the same hollow tones.

"The burden of a great guilt, intensified by the guilt of silence from year to year, has crushed me down and destroyed my manhood." He paused, and then continued. "Do you know what jealousy is? Yes, you do; it is classed under the head of

envy among the seven deadly sins, but you do not know it as I know it, as something which is never absent from you for a moment, as something which turns even the sweets of life into gall and wormwood, which drags you into hate and crime, as a demoniacal impulse which grows more mastering and morbid as life goes on. It is well you do not. I was born under the curse; it is an inheritance in my blood, and the stings of it even now as I stand on the brink of the grave, fasten with serpent fangs upon my soul. And yet it is sweet too, yes, very, very sweet. There was one girl I loved long, long ago. She was an angel. She might have made something godlike of me, had I had her love in return. There was one man whom I loved long, long ago. He *was* godlike. I loved him passionately as one man seldom loves another. I brought the two together. The moment their eyes met, I saw that my doom was sealed. She gave him what she had refused to me. But do you think I let them know that I saw it? No, I was not such a fool. I bided my time. Since the sweetness of love could not be mine, the sweetness of hate could. At one time, I had been willing to

sacrifice everything for the sake of the girl, and offered to waive social questions and marry her honourably, if she would take me; but when I saw that she loved him, I thought and plotted and lied, till my plans were successful, and her life was ruined. Then I plotted and lied till I had got him to loathe her, and refuse to marry her. I had hard work to do this, for my friend was not like me, he had a conscience. The next year I had the supreme satisfaction of her death. But did this quiet the devil in my heart? Not a whit. The man who had blighted my life was at large and prosperous. I did not tell him that the woman was dead. Outwardly, I continued his friend, for even while I hated him, by a curious paradox, not unknown to those who make a study of mental phenomena, I still loved him, and could not bear to leave him. Once more, after many years, again I loved, not with the old, pure love which comes only once in a life time, but with a strong, if lower, attachment. A second time my friend crossed my path and took my coveted prize from me. You know what my revenge was then. Oh, it was sweet, that lovely stolen honeymoon

among the Swiss Mountains. It was glorious to think of him, this time conquered and humbled, while I was in triumph. But it was all a delusion, she never loved me, she had left him in jealousy and spite. His cursed influence followed me even there, and the woman loved him, after she had left him, as she had never loved him before. I knew it, so I watched her. I gave her no money. One dark October night, in a wild mountain region, she fled from me penniless and thinly clad, alone over the Simplon Pass. She was soon to become a mother, and was not in a condition to stand fatigue. Two days after, she died raving mad in a little Ursuline convent at Viège. She had confessed to a Roman Catholic priest and received the sacraments the day before. Again I was humbled and my friend had triumphed, he who had not only stolen from me the two women I had loved, but who had been admired and applauded and given the first place, while I was passed over at college and upon the stage. The thing was intolerable to me. I returned to England after some years, and heard of his approaching ordination. It was my last chance. I

was living near here then with an old uncle. I wrote to the man at Winchester to come to me at once, or if he preferred it I would go to him, for I had a message for him from the dead. He came and waited for me here. Away from all human sights and sounds on a wild, windy day, I met him on this rock. He was changed, he was calm and self controlled. I felt from the first that my power over him was gone, but I did my best, for I knew the over sensitiveness of his nature. I told him that my message was one of undying hate. I said his wife had gone down, down, down, till even I had been forced at last to turn her out on the street. It stung him to the quick, he grew pale, but he answered not my taunts. Then I told him why I had sent for him. I threatened exposure, I painted his past sin in its most hideous and revolting colours. I laughed at the very idea of his setting himself up to preach to others, but it was in vain. He heard me out and then said, shaking from head to foot, but not with fear.

“Byrne, I know what you are and your motives, and they are so despicable that they do not even move me to anger. You may do your worst,

the threat of exposure does not alarm me. The facts of the case are already known to those who have a right to know them, and years of bitter repentance have in a measure wiped out my guilt in the eyes of the world. I do not fear you, you are too contemptible ; nay, if it is any satisfaction for you to know it, I have forgiven and forgotten you. There is not a word of truth in what you say about my wife ; something tells me it is false. If that is all you have to say to me, I must go ; my train leaves in an hour."

He brushed me aside and walked away erect and proud. I shrank from him as though he had spurned and crushed me under his heel. Then my fury overmastered me, and blind with passion I struck him from behind. He faced me, and we closed. He was strong, stronger than I, and shook me off. Humbled, baffled, and foaming with rage, I sprang up, as he turned to go, and catching his arm, dragged him back violently. I do not suppose that I had any definite intention. It was all done in a few seconds, but the suddenness of the action or the force of the gale which was blowing off shore, made him lose his balance.

We were close to the edge of the rock. He staggered backwards and catching involuntarily at me to save himself, fell over into the water, dragging me with him. I felt the awful plunge, the shock of the cold waves, and the despair. We rose to the surface side by side and struggled for life. We were not far from the rock, but in the huge seas that dashed against it, our efforts were wellnigh hopeless. Hazlewood was a better swimmer than I. He made for a little ledge which far down projects from the face of this rock. It was the only foothold that presented itself, but it was so small that it could barely afford shelter for one. He reached it and by a supreme effort drew himself up and mounted upon it. I saw that he was safe ; I was drowning. I could keep up no longer. My breath was gone. I tried to cry to him for help, but the water sucked me under and as I sank I put up my hands in despair. When I rose again, Hazlewood was at my side. He had dived into the waves to save me. I caught him frantically by the arm.

“Let go,” he said, “let go of my arm or we shall both drown.”

I did so, and held him round the body. Then with superhuman strength, against the wind and tide, he made once more for the ledge. I thought we should never reach it, for the sea heaved up and down, at one time dashing us against the rock, at another tearing us from it. But he saved me. All torn and bleeding, and choked with the salt water, he succeeded in catching hold of a piece of seaweed in a crevice, and while a wave for a moment raised us to a level with the ledge crawled upon it. Then I knew what he had done, that he had given his life for mine. But there was no time to think.

“Quick, quick, hold on there,” Hazlewood gasped, “you are safe. Climb down at low water. There is no room for two. I must try for the shore.”

“Don’t,” I cried, “don’t, you will be lost. The cove is too far off. The rocks here are like walls and run down sheer to the water.”

“I must,” he said, “I lose time. Stay where you are, you will be safe. I do not fear death.”

He said something else, but his voice was drowned in the roar of the winds and waves. He



let go of the rock and plunged back into the sea, and a great wave curled round him with strong white arms. He breasted it and I watched him as he struggled on. I knew that it was hopeless. He was exhausted by his efforts to save me. Little by little the tide bore him out beyond the lea of the rock. Suddenly the full force of the gale struck him and a cloud of spray hid him from view. I looked and thought he had gone, when again on the crest of a wave, I saw his pale face. He was still trying to swim, but his eyes were closed. I thought he was praying, for there was a look of resignation on his features which they had never worn before. I only saw him for a moment, for the wind howled and the spray beat upon me and blinded me, and when I looked again he was gone. All that night long, weak, and chattering with the cold, I clung to the rock. I shrank from the sea in horror, not because it meant death to me, but because it held Hazlewood's body. The roar of the breakers was full of the reverberations of his voice. In the white eddies of the waves, as they curled below me, I saw his dead face. His eyes opened and looked up at me. The phosphores-

cence of the spray was the shining of a spectral glory. The cold flakes of foam lapping the black rock beneath me were his white hands put forth to touch me. The horror drove me to madness, and when I was rescued by some fishermen at dawn, I was dazed and almost insensible, and I cried like a child. I only sobbed when they asked me how I had got there. The thing was a mystery then and a mystery it has since remained. I tell it to you now, for the truth has been hid too long. Publish it abroad, and let the world know the man as he was." He paused, as if struggling to suppress his emotion, then added ; "the shadows darken round me and my feet draw nigh to the iron gate which has so often shut relentlessly from human sight so much that was grand and noble, as well as so much that was mean and defiled, in the millions that have gone. If there could be hope for me, if I could yet find light, it would be owing to the light which the noblest and grandest soul I have ever met has cast upon my miserable heart. Farewell for ever."

He said no more and the darkness which had fallen blurred from view his retreating form. A

load had been lifted from me. The place seemed full of angels with shining wings, and I was caught up nearer to the starlit heavens. Shedding childlike, happy tears, I turned my face to the sea, over which the spirit of Hazlewood still brooded, and kneeling I poured forth my thankfulness to God.

## CHAPTER XII.

**Y**EARS and years have passed since I penned this memoir, and the hand I write now looks feeble and shaky beside that of the closing sentences of the last chapter. Here I sit in the old room in which Elton and I have so often sat together. The window is open, the moon is full, and over the perfect stillness of the summer fields comes the murmur of the sea. To-day I have spent in correcting this manuscript. It seems to me that the time has now come for giving it to the world. I have waited and waited conscious of its shortcomings, and how inadequately I have fulfilled my task. But now age is dulling my faculties, and I must accept this imperfection as inevitable. Let the book go forth as it is. It was to me when I wrote it, a labour of love for one whose love was passing the love of women, and it is to me now, as I re-read it, a source of tender solicitude and tears. To-night amid the scenes once so

familiar to him, in which he once lived and moved, he is to me real and living as he was of old. His face is lovely and fresh, his eyes full of spiritual light, and his hand gives the firm generous grasp it once gave.

Out there, under the still shadow of the church, is little Elton's grave with its message of hope to mankind "The Word was made Flesh," graven on the stone, round which the flowers are regularly tended, for the sake of the beloved dead, by a white-haired old clergyman and his wife. There, at the foot of the garden, is the gate where I last saw him over-shadowed by clouds that were prophetic of yet deeper gloom. The whole place still breathes of him, and the years as they have died away, have brought no real abatement of the love I bore him. Often when I lie awake at night, a vision of the stone cross, which now broods over the dark tides far away on the Cornish coast, comes before me, and in the gloom the altar rock is to me almost a second Calvary. For on the base of the cross is this inscription in letters of gold:

"Near this spot, Elton Hazlewood, for the love

and memory of God's Son, laid down his life to save that of his enemy."

O, true and noble heart, I consecrate this work to thy memory, and lay it before the world; trusting by it to show thee to men as thou wast in thy simple grandeur, and also to uplift by it the shadow of a great wrong which darkens the sanctity of thine unknown and unconsecrated grave. And now with it, I lay aside, as a sealed book, the sweet thoughts and the sad of our past earthly converse. For ought not I now to look forward, I, with my strength declining, with the future growing nearer, with my feet almost washed by the engulfing sea?

Even so, with no pain and no fear, I look onward to that reunion where now thou and thy loved ones are together, as it was told thee by God in a dream, 'for ever.'

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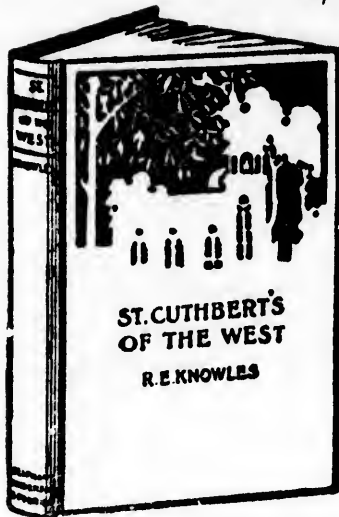
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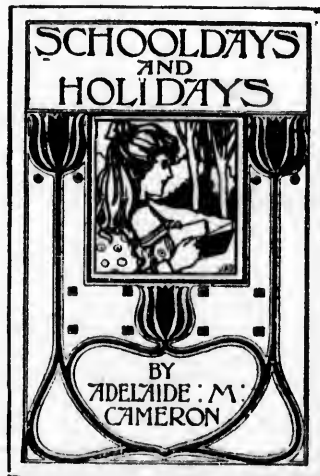


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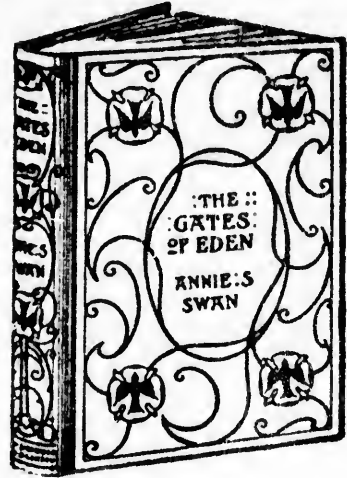


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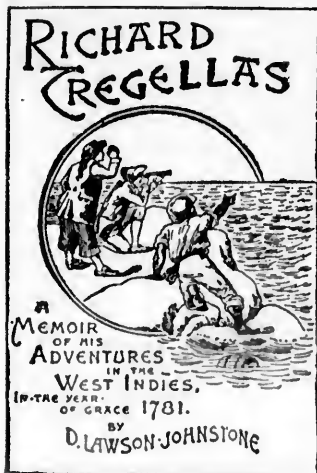
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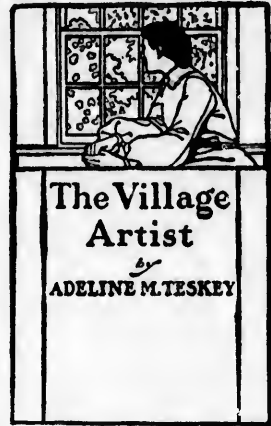
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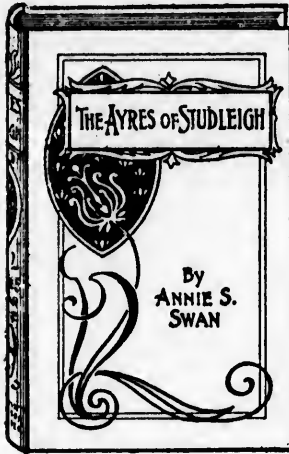
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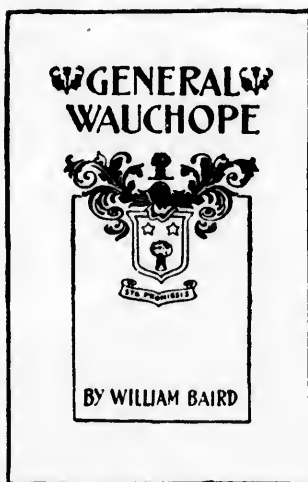
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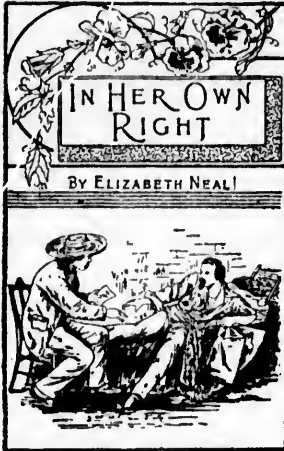


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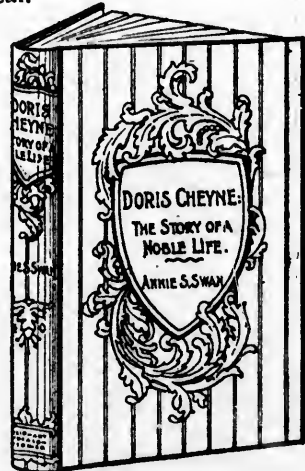
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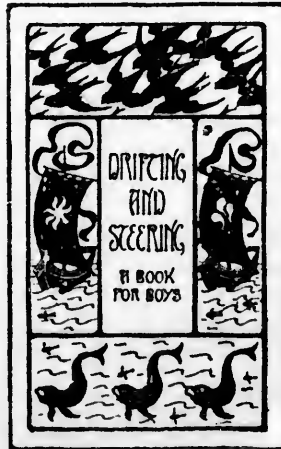
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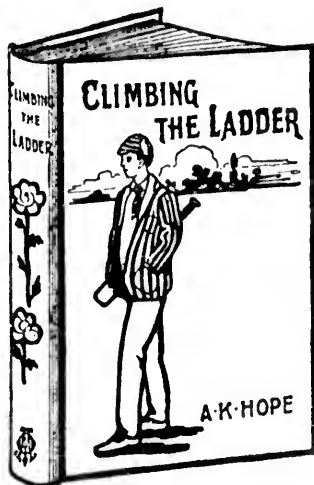
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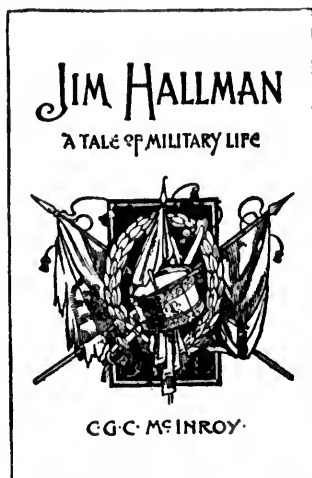
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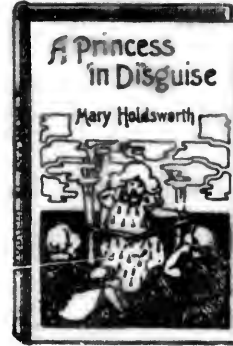
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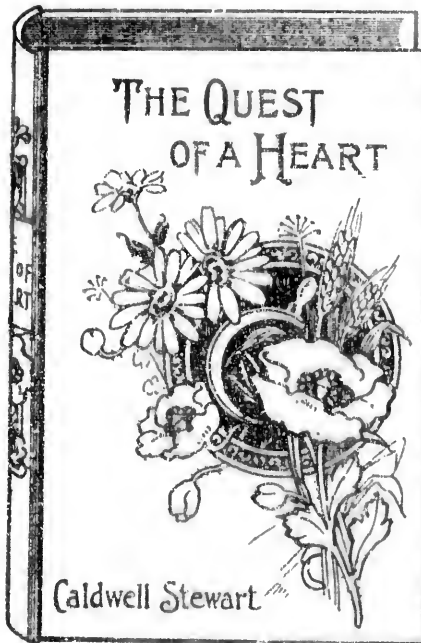
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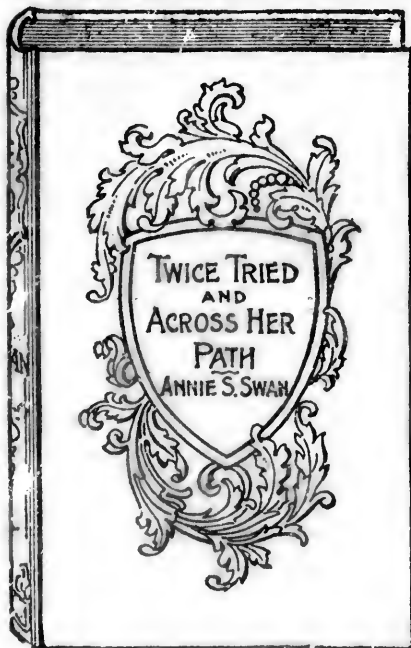
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